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THE RETURN OF THE GOLAN HEIGHTS

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

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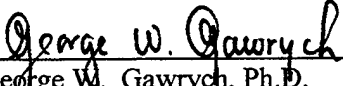
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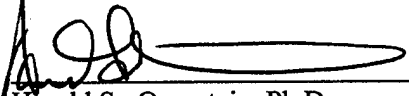
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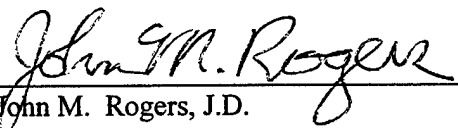
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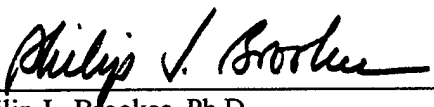
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ABSTRACT

THE RETURN OF THE GOLAN HEIGHTS by MAJ Neil F. Wilson, USA, 72 pages.

This study analyzes the conditions that need to be met in order for Israel to return the Golan Heights to Syria while maintaining its security.

Those conditions are: Israel and Syria must overcome history and politics; Israel must get asymmetrical disarmament zones; Syria and Israel must each have early warning stations; Israel must have a phased withdrawal from the Golan Heights; Syria must not interrupt water flow from the Golan Heights rivers; President Asad of Syria must instill peace in southern Lebanon; and Syria and Israel must reinstitute talks..

The study explains those conditions and their impact on the negotiations over the Golan Heights which is the focal point for peace between Israel and Syria. The study also outlines a solution for peace between Israel and Syria, taking into account the conditions. The overall conclusion is that if the conditions are not met, then peace is not possible.

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INTRODUCTION

No Arab-Israeli war is possible without Egypt, and no Arab-Israeli peace is possible without Syria.¹

Moshe Ma'oz, *Syria and Israel, From War to Peacemaking*

This thesis answers the research question: What are the conditions that must be met in order for Israel to give up the Golan Heights and maintain security? Those conditions are: Israel and Syria must overcome history and politics; Israel must get asymmetrical disarmament zones; Syria and Israel must each have early warning stations; Israel must have a phased withdrawal from the Golan Heights; Syria must not interrupt water flow from the Golan Heights rivers; President Asad of Syria must instill peace in southern Lebanon; and Syria and Israel must reinitiate talks.

The initial literature search for this paper revealed hundreds of publications that deal with the Golan Heights issues. Each of those publications focused on one central theme: years of bloodshed will continue until Israel and Syria agree to peace. The Golan Heights is the focal point for that peace.

The number one assumption that drives this thesis is that Syria and its President, H'afiz al Asad, will not offer peace to Israel without getting the Golan Heights in return. There are four factors that support that assumption:

1. Asad's character, based on his early life experiences, conditions his continuance of the struggle over the Golan Heights forever if necessary.
2. Asad suffered humiliation over the Golan Heights twice.
3. The Syrian public will not support Asad if he chose to give up the struggle for the Golan Heights
4. Asad's replacement will more than likely have the same attitude towards the Golan Heights.

Asad's Early Life Experiences

Patrick Seale, author of the book *Asad*, suggests there were two life experiences that helped develop Asad's character. Asad wants to be the leader for pan-Arab causes, particularly the return of Arab lands, and he is always concerned with his minority status. First, Asad, born on 6 October 1930, had a father and grandfather who had reputations of being able to solve conflicts among their fellow mountain villagers; they each practiced diplomacy through brute physical strength and common sense. In fact, they were called upon by other villages in the mountains to help settle various disputes.² It is not so unusual, then, to see Asad with those same traits and overwhelming desires to be looked upon as the village "problem solver." Now, however, that village is the entire Arab world. Although the Arab world has not called upon Asad to arbitrate Arab issues, he has striven and continues to strive for the image as a leader for the Arab causes.

The second life experience that influenced Asad's character occurred during his secondary education in the coastal city of Latakia. He was thrown in with urban people who treated him as a minority because he was from the poor mountains and was from the extreme Shi'a religious sect known as the 'Alawis. Asad's character--made strong by his grandfather's "muscular legacy" and his father's lessons in memorizing poetry to improve Asad's memory skills--prevented him from feeling inferior. As a result, prejudice did not hinder his academic performance.³

The second school experience was his becoming more aware of foreigners such as the French and British carving up territories that belonged to Syria and the rest of the Arab world. For centuries, "natural Syria" contained large portions of what was Palestine, Transjordan, Lebanon, and Syria. The various post-World War One "partitioning plans" chiseled away natural Syria's borders. France took Syria and Lebanon, whereas Britain took Palestine and Transjordan.

After the French left in 1946, natural Syria had been reduced even further, to 185,190 square miles, from what it had been during the Ottoman era which was 300,000 square miles.⁴ Asad found that the Ba'th political party addressed the deterioration of the Arab world in terms of nation(s), boundaries, and the future.⁵ The solutions that Ba'th provided to these issues coincided with Asad's personal philosophy and politics.

The Ba'th party seemed to be the answer after four centuries of Turkish rule, followed by French rule, followed by the carving out of Arab land. The Ba'th party saw Arabs as a depressed people needing to be taken out of their pit.⁶ Ba'thists believe that all Arabs have a rich cultural history and therefore deserve a place at the table of nations. Arabs from countries, such as Syria, that suffered the most deterioration from foreign influence, saw the Ba'th party as attractive in three ways. First, Ba'thists believed that in order to get to the table of nations all Arabs must unite as one nation because of history, ties to Islam, language, and aspirations.⁷ Second, Ba'th offered a chance for freedom from foreign control. Third, Ba'th offered an answer to previous political programs imposed by foreigners. That answer was socialism. This would take the wealth from a select few and pass it down to the masses.⁸ By the time Asad received his bachelor's degree in 1951, at age twenty, he was committed to the Ba'th movement. Thus, Asad's early life experiences drove him towards regaining Syrian territory such as the Golan Heights which had been lost in the 1967 war.

Asad's Humiliation Over the Golan Heights

One main reason Asad will not give up the fight for control of the Golan is because he suffered humiliation over it during two wars. The first incident over the Golan Heights occurred in 1967 when he was the Syrian Minister of Defense. Israel conducted a pre-emptive attack against Syria and Egypt and in doing so captured the Golan Heights. After the 1967 war, Israel retained the Golan. In 1970 Asad became President of Syria and began thinking of ways to

retake the Golan. Seale asserts: "from the moment of coming to power Asad was in the grip of an obsession He longed to wipe away the stain of defeat which had affected him personally and profoundly, restore confidence of his troops, recover the land, and show the world that, given a chance, the Arabs could acquit themselves honorably."⁹ Part of that preparation was teaming up with Egypt under the leadership of Anwar Sadat, who also wanted to reverse outcome of the 1967 war by effecting a return of all Arab lands. This led to the 1973 war, which was Asad's second humiliation over the Golan.

The planning that led up to the war of 1973 caused Asad to believe that Syria's and Egypt's actions would be successful in achieving the goal of regaining control of the Golan Heights.¹⁰ Unfortunately for Syria, this did not happen. On 6 October 1973, Syria attacked to seize the Golan, and Egypt attacked across the Suez Canal to the Sinai. Syria made some progress during the first couple of days in recapturing some areas in the Golan, particularly Mount Hermon. However, the Syrian offensive stalled before Egypt could get across the Suez Canal. Then Egypt essentially stopped the offensive after crossing the Suez, which forced Syria to fight alone. Since Syria had to take the brunt of the Israeli counteroffensive, particularly from the superior Israeli Air Force, Israel in just a few days recaptured all that was taken. Although Syria recaptured a small portion of the Golan, it then lost it; this was the second time Asad had to endure the pain of losing the Golan.¹¹

Syrian Public

Syrian public opinion and Asad's minority regime's potential enemies would not support Asad in giving up the struggle for the Golan even if he desired it. An article in the *Middle East Insight*, November-December 1997, supports the argument that public opinion is important in Syria. The article stresses that the Syrian public has been told since 1967 that the Golan was lost because of Zionist aggression and expansion. This helped produce a very patriotic attitude over

the Golan. The article equates this to past Israeli leadership convincing its citizens that the Golan is key to security. What is most remarkable is that although Asad is a very powerful dictator, he has concerns over the opposition that could occur among his countrymen if he gives up the struggle for the Golan.¹² The article contains a very revealing statement about Asad and his public:

Israelis believe that [Asad] would be able to impose on the Syrian public any deal he may manage to reach with Israel. This is not so. Syrian national pride is not a slogan; it is as real as the territory itself. Anyone with even a faint understanding of Syria's nationalism also understands that the people will not forsake land....Any Syrian leader perceived to be selling the country down the river would quickly be done away with.¹³

With regard to Asad's potential enemies, it is important to keep in mind that Asad's power base is from a minority sect, where the majority of Syria's population is Sunni. There is a growing trend towards fundamentalism and giving up the Golan would certainly stir up emotions among the radicals.

Asad's Replacement

The last factor that supports the assumption that Syria will not give up the struggle for the Golan is that Asad's replacement will more than likely maintain the same tough stance. In recent years news reports indicate at least a suspicion that Asad's health may be failing. A good report on who will fill in for Asad was done by Ben Wedeman in his article in the January-February 1994 version of *Middle East Insight*. Just before the article was written all of Syria thought the next ruler would be Asad's son, Basil, because he shared his father's ideals and was being groomed for the presidency.¹⁴ However, Basil died in a car accident, leaving speculation on who would be next in line. It is doubtful that any of Asad's remaining sons will fill the role because they were not groomed for it. The constitution says the senior vice president is in line, but he is Sunni and does not have the military power to back him.¹⁵ Of all of the remaining choices within Asad's close circle one stands out the most: Major General Ali-Aslan, Deputy

Army Chief of Staff. The Sunni majority population respects him, he has a day-to-day connection with the military, and he is most like Asad.¹⁶ Therefore, if Major General Aslan becomes the next leader, it is safe to assume he will carry on the same policies regarding the Golan.

Thesis Organization

There are six chapters to this thesis. The first chapter, "History and Politics," contains analysis of the historical and political aspects that must be overcome. The second chapter, "Asymmetrical Disarmament Zones, Early Warning Stations, and Phased Withdrawal," contains analysis of the need for different disarmament zones, early warning and monitoring stations, and phased withdrawal. The third chapter, "Water," contains analysis of why Israel needs uninterrupted water from the Golan Heights. The fourth chapter, "Peace in Southern Lebanon," contains analysis of why there needs to be peace in that region and supporting conditions that need to be in place. The fifth chapter, "Reinitiation of Talks," contains analysis of the occasions between 1991 and 1996 when peace between Israel and Syria seemed possible. Those occasions produced positive results that form part of a solution outlined in the sixth chapter, "A Solution". Chapter Seven provides an overall conclusion to the thesis.

NOTES

1. Moshe Ma'oz, *Syria and Israel, From War to Peacemaking* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), vii.

2. Patrick Seale, *Asad of Syria, The Struggle for the Middle East* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988), 3-8.

3. Ibid., 8.

4. Ibid., 15.

5. Ibid., 26.

6. Ibid., 30.

7. Ibid., 31.
8. Ibid., 30-31.
9. Ibid., 185.
10. Ibid., 185
11. Ibid., 204-208.
12. Alon Ben-Meir, "On the Golan Heights, the Syrian View Is Clear: Full Israeli Withdrawal for Full Peace, *Middle East Insight* 8, no.1 (November-December 1997): 53-54.
13. Ibid., 53.
14. Ben Wedeman, "Syria After Assad," *Middle East Insight* (January-February 1994), 18-19.
15. Ibid., 19.
16. Ibid., 19.

CHAPTER ONE

HISTORY AND POLITICS

This chapter details those historical and political aspects that either Israel and/or Syria must overcome as one of the conditions for Israel to give up the Golan Heights. Those aspects are:

1. The strategic value of the Golan Heights
2. Israel's past struggle over the Golan Heights
3. Israel's current unbending political climate
4. Israeli public opinion
5. Asad's concerns with peace

This study addresses history and politics first because they lay the foundation for the analysis of the remaining conditions.

The Strategic Value of the Golan Heights

Israel will have to give up the strategic advantages it has from the possession of the Golan Heights. The Golan's strategic value has six elements. First, the Golan Heights is the high ground between two belligerents. The Golan is actually a plateau that shoots up from the Jordan River valley to a height of 3,200 feet along the northeast boundary of Israel. From this high ground the occupier can easily observe the opposing force's movements, intentions, and disposition. Second, a portion of the Golan Heights is a launch platform for mechanized forces into Israel. Third, the Golan's length is forty miles and ranges from seven and one half miles to sixteen miles in width. Since the Golan lies between Syria and Israel, whoever possesses the Golan has more strategic depth, up to sixteen miles, than the other. This depth allows more of a security buffer and maneuver room along respective borders. Fourth, the Golan allows access to Mount Hermon, with an elevation of 7,296 feet, which enables Israel to conduct electronic

monitoring of the Syrian capital, Damascus. Mount Hermon and the Golan below also provide the occupier an early warning capability. Fifth, the Golan contains rivers that source 30 percent of Israel's water supply.¹ Lastly, 15,000 Israelis live in thirty one agricultural communities on the Golan.² Israel views these communities crucial to its national security.

Figure 1 illustrates the geographic location of the Golan Heights in relation to Israel and the remaining countries in the Middle East.

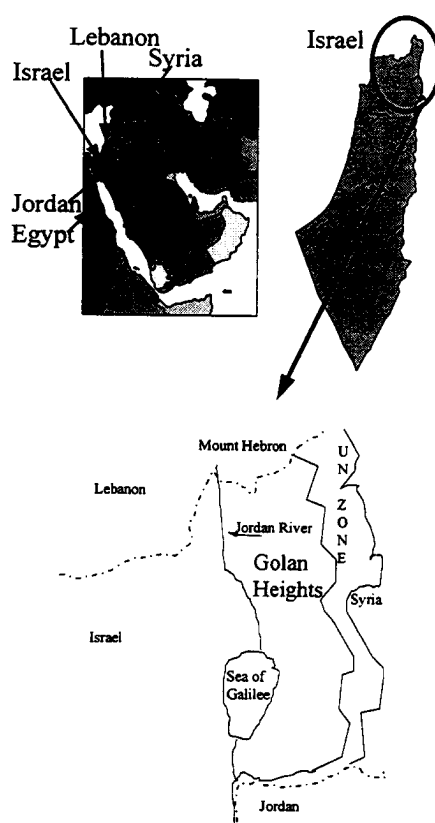


Figure 1 Golan Heights Position in the Middle East
 Legend: Top left diagram depicts the major countries of the Middle East. Top right depicts Israel and the bottom diagram depicts the Golan Heights. (Source: "Microsoft Power Point," *Microsoft Office* (Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation, 1994).

Jerry Asher, in his book *Duel for the Golan*, provides a description linking the military advantage of the terrain and the history of Israel's fight for the Golan:

There is nothing there for Israelis to fight for and die defending. But below, within easy gunshot of the lip of the Golan escarpment, is the jewel of Israel, the Huleh Valley, the vast drained swamp with topsoil many meters deep, a breadbasket of lush grain and vegetable fields, a fruit basket of thick orchards. Farther on, but still within range of Syrian guns before June 8, 1967, is the Galil, the Israeli heartland of towns and villages and fields and orchards....All you can see of Israel from the Golan is under your gun if you want it to be....Beneath your gaze are tractors tilling and reaping in the green Huleh Valley. If you want to, you can pull the pin from a hand grenade, lean out over the edge of the trench, and toss the bomb onto the roof of one of those tractors.³

The above quote vividly demonstrates the Golan as excellent defensible terrain. The United States Army calls this type of terrain "Key" because it offers the possessor, in this case Syria up until 1967, the following: excellent observation into the heart of Israel; excellent fields of fire into Israeli settlements in the Huleh Valley; and a natural obstacle in that an attacker would have to fight uphill against heavy fortifications.

Israel's Past Conflicts Over the Golan Heights

One of the most difficult aspects that must be overcome is that Israel will have to forgive and forget their conflicts over the Golan Heights. Those conflicts occurred prior to the 1967 War, during the 1967 War, and during the 1973 War. In 1949 there was a cease-fire that followed the 1948 Arab-Israeli war. The cease-fire left Syria holding the Golan Heights and Israel holding the Huleh Valley, both located just north of Lake Tiberias, also known as Sea of Galilee. Although there were demilitarized zones (DMZs), both countries' attempts to improve their respective military positions ended in actual or perceived threats to each other's security. This situation lasted for almost two decades during which time there were a number of clashes between Israel and Syria. These clashes would begin by Israeli settlers moving into demilitarized zones, then Syria would respond with massive artillery strikes from the Golan into Israeli

territory. Israel would then retaliate with artillery and airplanes. This situation lasted until the outbreak of the 1967 War.

Israel pursued the goal of capturing the Golan Heights in that war and again in 1973. During the 1967 war Israel conducted a pre-emptive attack against Syria, Egypt, and Jordan. Israel captured the Golan and thus according to author Elisha Efrat, "removed the Syrian threat and for the first time created a substantial distance between Israel's northern settlements and Syria."⁴ However, the conflict did not end there. It continued when the United Nations did not support Israel's territorial gains, yet at the same time called upon Arabs to recognize Israel's right to exist. The UN Security Council passed and adopted Resolution 242. Pertinent portions of that are:

The Security Council, expressing its continuing concern with the grave situation in the Middle East, emphasizing the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every state in the area can live in security, emphasizing further that all member states in their acceptance of the Charter of the United Nations have undertaken a commitment to act in accordance with Article 2 of the Charter,

1. Affirms that the fulfillment of charter principles requires the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East which should include the application of both the following principles:

(i) Withdrawal of Israeli forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict;
(ii) Termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgment of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence of every state in the area and their rights to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force;

2. Affirms further the necessity

(i) for guaranteeing freedom of navigation through international waterways in the area

(ii) for achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem

(iii) for guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and political independence of every state in the area, through measures including the establishment of demilitarized zones....⁵

The land became even more sensitive in the 1973 war when Syria recaptured a major portion of it during their offensive, but lost it when Israel drove them off just a few days later.

This second loss gave Syrian leadership a "black eye" in its failed attempt to retake the Golan in

1973. However, once again the UN failed to support Israel's position on the Golan but did call upon Arabs to recognize Israel's right to exist. The UN Security Council passed and adopted another resolution known as Resolution 338. The pertinent portions of that resolution are:

The Security Council:

1. Calls upon all parties to the present fighting to cease all firing and terminate all military activity immediately, no later than 12 hours after the moment of the adoption of this decision, in the positions they now occupy.
2. Calls upon the parties concerned to start immediately after the cease fire the implementation of security council resolution 242 (1967) in all of its parts;
3. Decides that immediately and concurrently with the cease fire, negotiations start between the parties concerned under appropriate auspices aimed at establishing a just and proper peace in the Middle East.⁶

To this day, Israel has failed to abide by the UN Resolutions because of its view that one of the keys to her security is the Golan Heights. From those heights, Syria possessed three major threat capabilities. First, the Golan offers a great "fields of fire" advantage: from that point a belligerent party can launch direct and, more importantly, indirect fires, usually artillery, into Israel, particularly the northern settlements. Second, the Golan offers an excellent staging area for launching a land invasion into Israel. Third, Syria's possession of the Golan would provide the advantage of being able to cut off the water supplies to the Jordan River, the principal water source for Israel. Thus, Israel will have to ignore all of its sound arguments for keeping the Golan Heights if it wants peace.

Israel's Past and Current Political Climate

Another aspect that Israel will have to contend with is its need to have the right leader and or government willing to sacrifice the Golan Heights in exchange for peace. If giving up the Golan Heights equates to the principle of Land for Peace, Israel will need one of two things to occur: Israel will need a Prime Minister who can transcend party doctrine that tends to reject giving up territory in exchange for peace or a Prime Minister and a parliament--Knesset--composition that can overcome the difficult task of disregarding public opinion in order to

achieve peace by first giving up territory. Two examples support this argument: Prime Minister Menachem Begin and his Likud coalition government of 1977 and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and his Labor coalition government of 1992.

Before discussing those examples a brief review of Israeli politics is necessary. Since its statehood in 1948, Israel has been a parliamentary democracy. Voters elect members to the Knesset by first casting their ballots for parties. Each party sends a number of candidates on a "party list" to the Knesset, based on the proportion of votes that party receives in the election. Since it only takes one percent of the vote to get a seat on the Knesset, any given Knesset will have a multiplicity of parties. What happens is the larger parties will not have enough votes for majority rule, so they will make deals with the other parties in order to enact the desired legislation. According to the author Naomi Chazan, this type of government has had to rely on "delicate coalitions cemented by trade-offs between potential partners."⁷ What makes government coalitions, according author Robert Bowkder, so delicate is the multiple "principal cleavages within Israeli society--including along socioeconomic-ethnic, religious-secular, and foreign policy-national security-lines...."⁸ The two major parties in Israel that comprise the various coalitions are Labor and Likud. Labor tends to be politically "left" and leans toward the idea of Land for Peace, whereas Likud tends to be politically "right" and leans against the idea of Land for Peace. Likud wants security first.

Menachem Begin is the first example of a leader who could form a delicate coalition and overcome his Likud coalition government's opposition to Land for Peace. In 1977 Begin became Prime Minister when the Labor Party lost elections to the Likud party. One of the reasons for their loss was that Labor encountered what authors Guilain Denoeux and Jonathan Fox have called "the move of the Israeli electorate to the right."⁹ The Likud Party, a coalition of right-wing groups, can trace its security position back, prior to World War Two, to the thinking of a

man named Z'ev Jabotinsky.¹⁰ Jabotinsky regarded Arab opposition to the state of Israel as inevitable and agreements with Arabs as doomed to failure. Jabotinsky said on a number of occasions, "the Iron Wall of Jewish military endeavor would protect Israel against Arab hostility."¹¹ This thinking was the Menachem Begin's inspiration. However, in 1979, under Begin and his Likud coalition government, Israel signed a treaty with Sadat that later returned the Sinai, captured in the 1967 war, to Egypt. In exchange, Egypt recognized Israel's right to exist and established normal and peaceful relations with Israel. It is possible that the primary reason for this shift to Land for Peace was due to Begin and Likud understanding that Egypt would continue to fight to get the Sinai as well as their realization that the prospect of peace outweighed any advantages they might achieve by holding on to the Sinai.

The second example of the type of leadership Israel needs in order to give up the Golan for peace is the Rabin and Labor coalition government of 1992. That government rejuvenated the Middle East peace process. A more detailed discussion of this rejuvenation will follow but for now a brief review will suffice. After 1992 Israel began implementing the "Land for Peace" formula. One of the major attempts for peace in the region was the Oslo Accords in the spring and summer of 1993, where Israel came to an agreement with Jordan and the Palestinian Liberation Organization. This agreement resulted in a peace treaty with Jordan and the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Gaza and Jericho.¹² It is the latter that best represents the notion that Israel, with the right government make up, can offer land to its Arab enemies in return for peace. In fact, even at that time, there were discussions during 1991 to 1996 among senior officials in Israel, Syria, and the United States on ways to return the Golan to Syria in exchange for full peace.

Unfortunately, Rabin's impact on those discussions came to a halt when at the height of the peace negotiations a terrible tragedy occurred. In 1995, Rabin was assassinated by a right-

wing lawyer who disagreed with "land for peace." Just six months later, Israeli voters surprised the world by electing a right-wing Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, and a right-wing coalition Knesset, led by the Likud Party. The loser was Shimon Peres, who led the Labor Party since Rabin's death. This election was one of the closest ever, with Netanyahu winning by less than 1% majority, fewer than 30,000 votes.¹³

This transition from the Labor Party to the Likud Party reflected changes among Israel's electorate. First, Israelis voted for a prime-minister directly and cast another vote for the Knesset. This allowed voters to vote for a prime minister and then vote for one of the smaller parties running for the Knesset. Denoeux and Fox provided the following example: "For example, in the 1992 election, a religious minded Sephardic Jew opposed to concession to the Palestinians was essentially forced to choose between Likud and Shas[a conservative religious party]. In the end this individual might have decided to vote for Likud, on the ground that the issue of security was paramount. In 1996, however, this same person could vote for Binyamin Netanyahu in the prime ministerial race, and for Shas."¹⁴ The Israeli-Arab electorate could do likewise by casting a vote for Peres and then voting for someone on the United Arab List for the Knesset. The end result of this change in voting was the decline in the number of mainstream Likud and Labor seats on the Knesset and the increase of small party representation on the Knesset.¹⁵

Second, the major issue debated during the election campaigns was the Oslo peace process. Those citizens who approved of the process tended to vote for Peres and those who did not, particularly the "land for peace" provision, voted for Netanyahu.¹⁶ Just like most Israeli ruling parties, Likud is also a coalition; however, it contains a number of right-wing parties that basically adhere to the idea that Israel should be secure prior to discussions of returning Arab

lands. An article published after the elections succinctly states Netanyahu's and the Likud coalition's stance on security:

Likud strove to emphasize that, unlike Labor, it would prevent negotiations with Arabs from crossing certain "red lines," the preservation of which was seen as matter of vital national interest. Four such red lines were concessions on Jerusalem, withdrawal from the Golan Heights, the delegation of security to the Palestinian Authority, and the acceptance of a Palestinian state.¹⁷

In contrast, Peres and Labor's platform focused on maintaining the agreements in the peace process while emphasizing security. Peres did not have the Golan Heights as a "red line." In fact, he and the Labor party stated that discussions of peace with Syria would continue.¹⁸ Peres believed that if the people elected him to stay on as Prime Minister it would mean he had the public support to negotiate with Syria over the Golan Heights.¹⁹ On 12 December 1995, Peres gave an emotional speech to the United States Congress where he said he would make demanding decisions over the Golan if Syria would do the same.²⁰

The current Israeli public remains against giving up the Golan Heights. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu insists that discussions with Syria must start over from square one. Netanyahu does not believe in honoring any verbal promises that Rabin and Peres made with Syria over the return of the Golan.²¹ Netanyahu has stated on television a number of times that there must be no preconditions for talks between Israel and Syria. Thus, in order for Israel to give up the Golan Heights, Netanyahu will have to become more like Begin, Rabin, or Peres. The other possibility is Israel will have to elect someone other than Netanyahu who is capable of giving up the Golan Heights in exchange for peace.²²

Israeli Public Opinion

Another important factor that must be dealt with over the return of the Golan Heights is Israeli public opinion. That opinion, since it weighs heavily on how its government formulates policy, will need to change in order for Israel to return the Golan Heights or the government will

have to go against public opinion. The analysis below illustrates that Israeli opinion, since 1968, does not support giving back the Golan Heights to Syria.

Asher Arian's book *Security Threatened, Surveying Israeli Opinion in Peace and War* demonstrates Israeli public opinion over the return of the Golan Heights to Syria. One of Arian's illustrations depicts opinion between 1968 and 1978, which fluctuated from 93 percent against giving up part or all of the Golan in 1968 to 74 percent against in 1978.²³ The reason for the drop in numbers representing those against the return of the Golan Heights in 1978 was the prospects for peace with Egypt seemed good. Although the Golan Heights is an Israeli-Syrian issue, peace with Egypt may have sparked hope for peace with Syria. Another table demonstrates opinion from 1992 to 94, which was during the encouraging talks among Syria, Israel, and the United States. This table reflects the willingness of Israeli citizens to return the Golan Heights to Syria:

1. Unwilling to give back any of the Golan: 46 percent
2. Willing to return a small part: 33 percent
3. Willing to return a large part: 14 percent
4. Willing to give up the entire Golan Heights: 7 percent²⁴

The significance of the data, when compared to 1978 data, is although most Israelis are against giving back the Golan Heights, the number against decreases when Syria and Israel make attempts to solve their problems.

After Presidents Clinton and Asad met in January of 1994, when once again Asad demanded full withdrawal from the Golan, another poll was taken to check Israeli public opinion flexibility. The results are in the Table 1.

When Israelis were asked the questions with the notion that Syria would grant a full peace in return, there was no change in position.²⁵ However, Arian makes an excellent point

when he states that: "...returning the Sinai Peninsula...Israel wanted to keep it most in October of 1973 when the surprise attack by the Egyptian army threatened the loss of the peninsula to Egypt by war. In 1977, however, after Sadat's...visit to Jerusalem, the rate of refusal to return the Sinai plummeted...."²⁶

Table 1 Israeli Public Opinion

Should Israel Be Flexible With Regards To:	% Opposed
Limiting the freedom of movement by Israelis on the Golan	81
Control of water	80
Syrian Sovereignty over the Golan	78
Removal of Israeli settlements from the Golan	71
US military units between IDF and Syria	55
Number of years for complete implementation of an agreement	55
Control the introduction of armed forces on both sides of border	52
Demilitarize the Golan	52

Source: Asher Arian, *Security Threatened, Surveying Israeli Opinion in Peace and War* (Cambridge: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, 1995), 102

A very possible conclusion is that when the Israeli public feels threatened, the likelihood of wanting to give up territory is small. Arian supports this conclusion in his statement: "Threat was very effective in predicting an individual's willingness to risk returning the territories for peace....The threatened were most reluctant to change the status quo."²⁷ Likewise, when the public feels less threatened there is a tendency to be more flexible on giving up territory--at least that was the case over the Sinai. Therefore, if the politicians decide to give up the Golan

Heights, public opinion will initially be against them; however, once Syria demonstrates commitment to peace, it is very likely the rate of refusal to return the Golan will "plummet."

Asad's Concerns

Although Asad wants the Golan Heights returned to Syria, he has two concerns over full peace with Israel that he must overcome, and a third concern involving economics that Israel will have to overcome. First, there is a chance that Asad would get into trouble even if he obtains the Golan by making peace with Israel. Asad is able to keep a larger military for its struggle with Israel. Getting the Golan back would cause most Syrians to want to downsize their military because of the tremendous cost of maintaining a larger-than-necessary force. However, Asad needs his military force intact to be able to respond to his internal enemies. Second, Asad wants to maintain his strength among the Arabs as the only holdout against Israel.²⁸

Asad's third concern is economics. Asad's minority regime sees peace in the region as an economic threat. The kind of peace Israel wants with Syria would bring trade that would require Syria to change its state control policies over business. This would result in a rise in unemployment because government and business would have to become more efficient. High unemployment would cause civil unrest that could put Asad's minority regime in a bad light. That is something Asad would want to prevent.²⁹ Therefore, in order for Israel to return the Golan Heights to Syria, Asad has concerns he must overcome and Israel will have to settle for a peace that does not involve establishing any economics ties between the two states.

Conclusion

This chapter analyzed history and politics that Israel and Syria must overcome. In order for Israel to give up the Golan, it will have to give up strategic terrain and forget its past struggles over the Golan. Israel's current political climate and public opinion over the Golan will have to accept the formula of Land for Peace, much like Begin's Sinai deal with Egypt. Asad will have

to keep a strong military to protect his minority regime and take risks that peace would bring, such as losing his image as seen by his proud Syrian citizens as the last hold out against Israel. Israel may have to accept a peace that does not involve strong economic exchange with Syria.

NOTES

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CHAPTER TWO

ASYMMETRICAL DISARMAMENT ZONES, EARLY WARNING STATIONS, AND PHASED WITHDRAWAL

This chapter analyzes three critical military conditions that must be met in order for Israel to give up the Golan. First, Syria must allow Israel to have its forces on its border with Syria, but Syria must not have any military forces on the Golan Heights with the exception of a brigade size force. The reasons for this are: Syria has a larger standing army than Israel and Syria could more easily fight a "war of attrition," the best war option for Syria, from the Golan Heights.¹ Second, in order for both countries to have confidence in the other's fulfillment of any peace deals, they each need early warning and monitoring stations that can overwatch potential invasion routes. Third, Israel needs to phase its withdrawal from the Golan for two reasons: Israel needs time to relocate people who live on the Golan and to maintain a safety mechanism that will allow Israel to back out of the deal if Syria does not fulfill its part.

Disarmament Zones

When two belligerents decide to make peace a good first step is to separate their armies. The next step is to create demilitarized zones (DMZs). When a DMZ is not a sufficient buffer to prevent future fighting, belligerents need to have disarmament zones where the peace agreement limits weapon types and quantities. Those disarmament zones are usually within the sovereign territories of the respective belligerents. As the following analysis shows, Israel cannot afford disarmament limitations once it gives up the Golan Heights. Therefore, Israel and Syria must agree to "asymmetrical" disarmament zones where Israel can have unlimited forces on its border with Syria but Syria does not get to have its forces, with the possible exception of a small token force to demonstrate Syrian sovereignty, on the Golan Heights--its border with Israel.

The Armies

The reason Israel needs its forces closer to its border is because it has a smaller standing army than Syria. The bulk of Israel's military strength comes from its reserves; therefore Israel's strength is not readily available. Israel maintains an active army of only 136,000 but relies heavily on its reserve force of 363,000.² Syria's army is primarily a standing force of 306,000 on active duty with a reserve of 100,000.³ Syria can more easily attack Israel from the Golan with a larger standing force before Israel can mobilize. Israel's mobilization plans call for Israel to take from twenty-four to ninety-six hours to alert, equip, and move its reserves into battle.⁴ Israel's possession of the Golan makes it easier to defend Israel than without the Golan.⁵ Syrian possession of the Golan with a larger army leaves Israel at a disadvantage. To help lessen the impacts of this disadvantage, Israel must have sufficient strength on its border with a potentially hostile country.

Syria's War of Attrition

The reason Syria cannot have forces on the Golan Heights is the heights will significantly improve Syria's ability to attack Israel. From the Golan Heights, Syria would be able to aim, control, and observe its direct and indirect fire weapon systems while attacking Israeli military and civilian targets. Syria could also launch a major offensive into Israel by maneuvering its forces downhill into Israel. Therefore, without the Golan Heights, Syria would not have as great a control over its weapon systems and would not have as easy an invasion route into Israel. However, an all out offensive by Syria maneuvering off the Golan Heights into Israel is not likely. What is a more likely option for Syria is its using the Golan Heights to engage Israel in a prolonged war of attrition. There are two factors that support this option.

First, Syria understands what history demonstrates and that is Israel's fears of high casualty counts. From a military point of view, the Israelis put a great deal of effort into their

war fighting doctrine, training, and procurement in order to minimize and/or treat battle casualties.⁶ Dr. George Gawrych of the U.S. Army's Command and General Staff College believes, "The majority of high losses experienced by the IDF [Israeli Defense Force] during the first two days of the war [1973] can be attributed, in large measure, to the Israelis stubborn determination to relieve their troops at the strongpoints."⁷ That holds true even today as an Israeli field grade Army officer, attending the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College 1998 school year, stated: "We drop everything we are doing and rush to our wounded." From a public opinion point of view, the Israelis saw that increasing casualties were proof of a failing strategy. Hirsh Goodman claims in his book *The Future Battlefield and the Arab-Israeli Conflict* that a number of previous government leaders and cabinet members lost their positions because of the increase in Israeli casualties in various conflicts. Most notable was Begin's resignation mainly due to increasing Israeli casualties in Lebanon.⁸

Because Syria sees Israeli concerns for casualties as a major weakness, Syria favors a war of attrition over other war options, because it can cause casualties in Israel without engaging its forces in direct offensive combat against a better trained army.⁹ Syrian military equipment, as the next section explains, in comparison to Israel's is such that it is able to conduct a war of attrition more so than any other war option.

Israeli and Syrian Military Equipment Comparisons

The second factor that supports a Syrian war of attrition is the equipment Syria has to wage war is not suitable to an all out offensive against Israel but the equipment types and quantities are good enough to wage a war of attrition. Tables 2 and 3 show that in some items of equipment Syria outnumbers Israel, while in other items Syria is equal to or less than Israel. Those tables show the strength of Israel and Syria in terms of inventories of armor, artillery, anti-

tank, air defense, combat-capable aircraft, and strategic weapons by estimating quantities of major weapons systems that both Israel and Syria could bring to bear in a military conflict.

Analysis of Comparison Tables

Tables 2 and 3 show that Syria is more than capable of conducting a war of attrition from the Golan. If Syria does not possess the Golan Heights, its tanks, infantry vehicles, and most of its artillery could not as easily reach Israeli settlements in the Huleh valley. However, with the Golan Heights, the sheer numbers of major weapon systems enable Syria to inflict high numbers of casualties. However, there are some special considerations not reflected in the tables that warrant discussion. First, while both Syria and Israel possess almost an equal number of main battle tanks, Syria possesses old Soviet equipment that is reaching its end of life expectancy date. Also, a Soviet tank has thinner armor, and, therefore less crew protection. The Soviet tank also has old technology that cannot compete as well as Israeli tanks, which can shoot more accurately on the move, fire more deadly ammunition, and better engage targets under conditions of obscured vision. Although only a one-to-one ratio in tanks exists, the technological differences would change the effectiveness somewhat considerably in favor of Israel--meaning it would take more Syrian tanks to compete with one Israeli tank. Even so, Syria could use its tanks advantageously from the Golan during a war of attrition.

The second special consideration is in the aircraft comparisons. At first glance, the issue has nothing do with a Syrian war of attrition from the Golan Heights. However, both forces would have to bring in their air power in support of any ground operations. Table 1 and 2 depict Syria having more rotary wing combat aircraft than Israel, but, just as in tanks, Israel's aircraft can outfire and out-maneuver Syrian aircraft. But once again the Syrian systems are able to inflict damage on the remote chance these aircraft escape air defenses and enter Israel. The fixed-wing aircraft are a different story. Israel not only has more than Syria, but it has much

Table 2. Comparison of quantities of major weapon systems

Item Description	Israel Quantity	Syria Quantity	Remarks
Main Battle Tank	>3,800	>4000	Approximately 1/2 of Israel's tanks are "high quality" whereas more than 1/2 of Syria's tanks are low quality
Mechanized Infantry Vehicles	>8,100	>4800	Most of Israel's infantry vehicles are considered "high quality" whereas most of Syria's are considered "low quality"
203 mm Howitzer	35	0	
175-180 mm range Howitzer	230	10	
122-155 mm range Howitzer	1190	2266	Syria quantity is mostly 122mm whereas Israel quantity is mostly 155mm
105 mm Howitzer	95	0	
Multiple Rocket Systems	100	500	
Artillery Locating Radar	Unknown	0	Israel has radar capable of locating artillery/mortar fire points
Anti-tank weapons	1195	3390	
Short Range Air Defense	1000	4000	
High to Medium Altitude Air Defense	200	1000	
Rotary Wing Combat Aircraft	81	191	
Fixed Wing Combat Aircraft	749	525	Israel has more capable weapon systems in terms of fire direction, all conditions operations, weapons control

Source: *Janes Sentinel Eastern Mediterranean 1996 edition* (Surrey, United Kingdom: Sentinel, Janes Information Group), 3.11.12 and 6.11.12.

Table 3. Comparison of Strategic Weapons

Item Description:Israel	Israel Quantity	Item Description: Syria	Syria Quantity
Jericho 1 Ballistic missile 500 KM range, 500 KG payload	150	Tochka Ballistic missile, 120 KM rang, 480 KG payload	36
Jericho 2 Ballistic missile 1500 KM range, 1000 KG payload	50	Scud B Ballistic missile, 300 KM range, 985 KG payload	200
Lance Ballistic missile, 130 Km range, 450 KG payload	160	Scud C Ballistic missile, 550 KM range, 985 KG payload	60

Source: *Janes Sentinel Eastern Mediterranean 1996 edition* (Surrey, United Kingdom: Sentinel, Janes Information Group),3.11.12 and 6.11.

more advanced systems capable of out-maneuvering, out-firing, and out-distancing Syrian fixed-wing. The major point here is that Syria does possess more air defense systems than Israel, a fact that negates some of the differences between the countries' types of aircraft. With regard to Israeli air defense, *Janes Sentinel* warns, "Despite its shortcomings . . . the [Syrian] air force is still capable of making a lethal strike against Israel . . . [and] a mass attack could allow it to tie up and saturate Israel's air defense, allowing its bombers to make a damaging attack on a target such as Tel Aviv."¹⁰

The third special consideration is that Syria does have ballistic missiles capable of delivering Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), particularly lethal chemicals, to just about anywhere in Israel.¹¹ Although Syria does not need the Golan to launch its WMD, it can better observe, control, and assess WMD effects from the Golan.

The final special consideration is most of Syria's military equipment was made by the Soviet Union, which no longer exists. During the Cold War, Syria was able to compete with Israel by purchasing major army and air force weapon systems from the Soviet Union. In fact,

the Soviets on a number of occasions gave very generous credit terms to Syria. This military assistance program enabled the Soviets to have a presence in the region that helped counter Israeli military strength and Western influence, particularly that of the U.S.¹²

After the breakup of the Soviet Union during the early nineties, Syria had major difficulties finding new sources of military equipment. Russia began demanding more hard cash because of its own problems in converting to a free market economy. Syria owed a large amount of money on remaining credit balances, but the problem lessened when Saudi Arabia paid off the majority of the debt for Syria because of Syrian support during the Gulf War. *Janes Sentinel* claims "there were reports that an additional transfer of \$500 million worth of equipment had been agreed."¹³ This transfer solved some of the problems in advanced aircraft but still left Syria short on sufficient repair parts and computers for its remaining aircraft, tanks, and artillery. Although Syria can buy arms from other Eastern European countries, the problem of paying with hard cash remains. All of this initially put Syria at an extreme disadvantage, but that seems to be changing. Syria has found new suppliers in other parts of the world, such as North Korea, China, Pakistan, and Czech Republic.¹⁴ Although those countries do not supply the most advanced sophisticated equipment, Syria can still maintain sufficient amounts of equipment to engage in a war of attrition from the Golan Heights. Therefore, with respect to all of the considerations discussed above, it is in Israel's best interest to have its forces on the Israeli-Syrian border and Syria does not get to do the same.

Early Warning and Monitoring Stations

In order to gain confidence with any peace agreement, Israel and Syria both need a way of monitoring each other's troop concentrations, locations, and activities. This serves two purposes: self verification of peace agreements and, more importantly, provision of early warning in the event the other side decides to wage war. Israel needs an early warning and

monitoring station more than Syria because Israel needs the time to mobilize its reserves.

However, Syria will need a station as well if a peace agreement allows for Israeli forces to be on the Israeli-Syrian border while Syrian forces have to be away from the border.

Israel already occupies an early warning station on Mount Hermon, which is part of the Golan.¹⁵ This terrain feature is an excellent intelligence collection platform where Israel can spy on its most dangerous enemies. Robert Friedman reported in the April 1995 edition of *Harper's*, "On a clear day they not only can see the Cham Palace Hotel (Damascus's tallest building) but can also listen in on phone calls as far away as western Iraq."¹⁶ Syria does not have such a station. The chapter titled "A Solution" will recommend that Syria be allowed to have a similar station within Israel.

Phased Withdrawal

A third requirement is Israel's need to have a phased withdrawal from the Golan Heights. As the introduction stated, there are two reasons Israel needs to withdraw in phases. First, Israel needs time to relocate its citizens now living in the Golan region and their livelihoods. The area is inhabited by approximately 31,000 people in about thirty six communities. Approximately 16,500 of those are Syrians found in only five communities. The rest are Jewish settlers who have occupied the area since 1967.¹⁷ In addition to moving the Israeli communities, Israel would need to consider the economic activity on the Golan.

The Golan Heights Residents' Organization published figures that represent economic activity on the Golan: 5,000 acres of field crops; 4,000 acres of orchards; 35,000 tons of flower production; 100,000 acres of natural pasture; 20,000 head of cattle and sheep; 5,000 head of dairy cattle; 60,000,000 liters of milk per annum; and 1,750,000 tourists per annum. According to the Europa's Publications book *The Middle East and North Africa 1997*, the agricultural contributions to the domestic product is only 4.5 percent.¹⁸ Since this total reflects the entire

state of Israel, it is doubtful that the loss of these other economic activities on the Golan would deteriorate Israel's overall economy. However, in addition to relocating homes, the human dimension would necessitate Israel's finding a way either to reproduce the same economic activity off the Golan or compensate the loss of employment in those economic activities.

The second reason Israel would need a phased withdrawal is the need to maintain a way of backing out of its agreements with Syria in the event Syria becomes hostile or just in the event Syria reneges on its side of the agreement. If Syria opened hostilities during a withdrawal, it is more likely Israel could resort to a more limited response than if Syria had the entire Golan. This safety valve would tie into public opinion as well. For example, if the first phase of the withdrawal went well, chances are the public would feel less threatened.

Conclusion

This chapter analyzed why Israel and Syria should have asymmetrical disarmament zones; the need for both to have early warning and monitoring stations; and Israel's need for a phased withdrawal. The analysis showed Israel should be able to mass its forces on its border to maintain a suitable defense, whereas Syria must have its forces off the Golan. This is because Syria has a larger standing Army and can, with its inferior but large quantities of combat equipment, wage a prolonged war of attrition from the Golan. Syria understands that a war of attrition is perhaps the best chance of success based on its inferior equipment and Israel's concerns over high casualties. If Syria and Israel agree to asymmetrical disarmament zones, they will each need early warning and monitoring stations to verify peace agreements and provide warning if those agreements fail. Finally, Israel needs the time a phased withdrawal would give to care for its citizens on the Golan and test Syria's commitment to peace.

NOTES

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CHAPTER THREE

WATER

Any agreements between Israel and Syria over the Golan Heights must ensure Israel's unhindered access to the waters that flow from the Golan Heights area. Because Israel is in one of the most arid regions in the world and has a large population for a limited water supply, it must have fresh water in order to survive. Water, simply put, sustains everything: agriculture, industry, life. Because Israel and Syria are considered arid, what few water sources exist become extremely important to their respective national securities, for without water nothing could be sustained. Perhaps the greatest impact on water in the region is the lack of harmony among Israel and its neighbors, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan. The Jordan River is one of the main sources of strife among these countries, especially Israel and Jordan, which depend on the river for survival. The Golan Heights comes into play because it contains the headwaters that feed into the Jordan River. That river provides Israel with thirty percent of its fresh water needs. The Israeli government's current position on the Golan's water is hard to gauge because it refuses to discuss withdrawal from the Golan Heights period. Past Israeli governments, however, insisted that Syria not disrupt water flow from the Golan Heights into Israel. Syria's response has been that Syrian waters are not subject to external control.¹

Miriam R. Lowi, author of *Water and Power*, accurately describes how Syria and Lebanon view the Jordan river: "Lebanon and Syria, on the other hand, could have used a portion of the waters for domestic purposes, but given their favorable position as upstream riparians and the fact that they each had other relatively abundant national rivers, they considered the river [Jordan] primarily as a geopolitically strategic resource vis-à-vis Israel, downstream."² This suggests that Syria has more water than Israel and since Syria has the upstream sources it has the ability exploit Israel's weakness in water sources for political gain. Because Syria can get

its water from outside sources such as Turkey, as well as internal sources, this chapter focuses only on Israel's reasons for needing the Golan's water. Those reasons are:

1. Golan Heights rivers feed fresh water into the Jordan River.
2. Israel's security, agriculture, immigration, and ideology require fresh water.
3. Israel is unable to overcome some of its technological challenges, such as cost and environmental consequences.

The Reasons Israel Needs the Golan's Water

The Golan Heights' Rivers

Approximately one-third of Israel's fresh water supply is from the Jordan River. The key is that the water sources from the Golan Heights are what feed the Jordan River. These sources, called headwaters, are the Dan, Hasbani, and Banias Rivers (fig. 2)

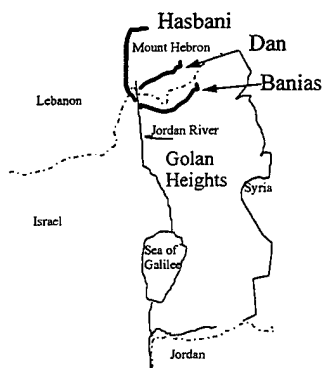


Figure 2. The Golan's Waters

The three rivers provide more than fifty percent of the water to the Jordan River, and two of these rivers, the Hasbani and Banias, at some point in their travels south cross the Golan Heights. Therefore, whoever controls the Golan can influence the majority of the sources that give life to the Jordan.

Israel's Security, Agriculture, Immigration, and Ideology

The reason Israel needs a tremendous amount of water is directly tied to its ideology and security. The basic Israeli ideological principle is the nation is tied to the land through the workers who work the land. Those who work the land with their own hands own the land; therefore, it became important to establish an aggressive agricultural development program.³

This agricultural program dispersed settlements throughout the country which had the side effect of increasing security. Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, said, " 'We must go to the borders or the borders will come to us.' "⁴ Israel established agricultural communities throughout the country, particularly in more arid regions, to improve the means ideologically to connect to the land, at the same time dispersing its populations to improve defense.

Israel's need to establish communities throughout the land was also driven by Israel's policy, which Syria does not like, of open immigration to all Jews. David Ben-Gurion stated:

the scope of our defense...does not depend on our Army alone....Israel can have no security without immigration....Security means the settlement and peopling of the empty areas in the north and south...the establishment of industries throughout the country; the development of agriculture in all suitable areas; and the building of an expanding (self sufficient) economy....Security means economic independence.⁵

This quote demonstrates Israel's need, in terms of ideology and security, to establish communities, agriculture, and industry throughout all of Israel. The challenge is getting water to all of those places, particularly those in the more arid regions of Israel.

That challenge is made more difficult because the most plentiful water sources in Israel are found in the north and northeast. Unfortunately, the greatest demand for water in terms of population, industry, and irrigable land is in the central portion of Israel and along the coastal plains. Since Israel continues to develop in the arid south region, that area must also get water.

Another challenge is Israel's water demands exceed supply. A 1988 review of water consumption shows that Israel's water demand was 1,950 million cubic meters. The available fresh water resources only produced 1,865 million cubic meters. Those available sources were primarily the river flow from Upper Jordan and Yarmouk, groundwater, flood water, and recycled wastewater.⁶ The largest of those sources was groundwater at 1,200 million cubic meters in 1988; second to that was the Jordan River, which provided 580 million cubic meters. According to Lowi, Israel has been overpumping the groundwater sources for over twenty years and continues to do so at a rate of 200 million cubic meters a year.⁷ The prospects of more demands for water increase as immigration increases. This is all made worse by extended drought seasons, such as those experienced in the late eighties and early nineties. Therefore, Israel needs all the water it can get from the Golan Heights.

Technology Challenges

The last reason Israel needs the Golan Heights' waters involves technology challenges. One of the most attractive ways for Israel to have fresh water is by utilizing a process known as desalination. The reason this process is so attractive is Israel would not have to rely on its neighbors for water. Unfortunately, the cost of desalination is too high. It would cost Israel about 60 billion dollars in gross national product just to put a desalination plant into operation.⁸ The bulk of the costs comes from the energy needed to convert salt water into fresh water.

The oil producing Gulf States are able to desalinate because they can use the excess energy from their oil extraction plants to feed desalination plants. Israel does not have that energy source. In fact, Israel has to import its energy.⁹ There are two plans that could overcome the energy issue. One is the "Med-Dead" and the other is the "Red-Dead."¹⁰ These plans take water from their namesake seas, such as the Red Sea, via canals to the Dead Sea which is at a much lower elevation. When the water drops in elevation it creates enough energy to run a

desalination plant next to the Dead Sea. However, these plans have two problems. First, laboratory tests show that mixing the Red and Mediterranean lower salt concentration sea waters with the Dead Sea's higher salt concentrations causes chemical imbalances that negatively affect health and the environment. Second, the costs to bring the desalinated water up from the Dead Sea to the areas that need the fresh water would negate the energy achieved from dropping the salted water.¹¹

Conclusion

This chapter analyzed the reasons why any peace agreement over the Golan Heights must allow Israel's unhindered access to the Golan waters. Israel's growing population, security, and an ideology based on agriculture put demands on an already scarce resource: fresh water from the Jordan, which the Golan waters feed. Unfortunately, desalination will not work until the cost of that technology becomes more affordable. Therefore, Israel needs the waters that flow from the Golan Heights.

NOTES

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8. Boaz Wachtel, "Water--The Sad Facts and Dire Politics," *Link Magazine*, November-December 1996 [magazine on-line]; available from <http://www.link.co.il>; Internet; accessed 19 January 1998.

9. Boaz Wachtel, "From Peace Pipelines To Peace Canals," *Middle East Insight* 8, no.1 (November-December 1993): 27.

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CHAPTER FOUR

PEACE IN SOUTHERN LEBANON

The most important condition for Israel that must be met before it returns the Golan Heights is: Asad must ensure peace in southern Lebanon. The previous chapters analyzed conditions that center around the Golan Heights. In contrast, this chapter analyzes a condition that has no geographic connection to the Golan Heights but is the most important obstacle hindering a peace settlement, particularly from an Israeli stand point, for two reasons. First, it is from southern Lebanon that Hizbollah terrorists launch their deadly attacks against Israel. Second, if Asad wants the Golan Heights returned, he must demonstrate to Israel his commitment to peace. The best way Asad can demonstrate his commitment to peace is by ensuring peace in southern Lebanon.

Before proceeding with the analysis, it is important to note that there is one assumption that is the foundation for this chapter: Lebanon alone is unable to ensure peace in southern Lebanon. It will need Syria to control Hizbollah in order to instill peace in the area. Then Syria can make peace with Israel. Then and only then can Lebanon make peace with Israel. As a senior Lebanese field grade Army officer attending the U.S. Army's Command and General Staff College's 1997-1998 academic year once said, "Lebanon would have to be the very last Arab nation to make peace with Israel because Lebanon contains so many anti-Israel religious factions that would never agree to peace with Israel. Lebanon also has few resources of its own; therefore, it must rely on external support from other countries some of which are anti-Israel. If the Lebanese government did attempt to make peace with Israel, it would be vulnerable to internal attacks and loss of external resources that it needs in order to survive." This attitude can be taken a step further by saying the Lebanese government would be too vulnerable to use its military as the sole force to stop attacks against Israel without the approval of all Arab states.

In order to achieve peace in southern Lebanon, the following supporting conditions must be met:

1. Asad will have to disband and disavow the Hizbollah terrorist groups currently operating in southern Lebanon.
2. Israel will have to depart southern Lebanon
3. Israel will have to let Syria remain in southern Lebanon

The Supporting Conditions

Asad Must Disband and Disavow the Hizbollah

The most important and immediate supporting condition for Asad to meet is to stop the Hizbollah from killing Israelis. Asad is very capable of controlling Hizbollah's ability to wage war because its Iranian supplied weapons, money, and other materiel must come through Syria.¹ Asad has in the past asserted this capability a number of times when it has suited him. For example, Asad demonstrated the ability to reign in Hizbollah when he halted the Hizbollah's rocket attacks against Israel in July 1993. At that time Asad felt he had the United States' and Israel's attention for pursuing a political settlement that involved all Arab states to include Syria. In July of 1992, Asad demonstrated his ability to control Hizbollah by encouraging it to attack Israel in order to show his strength in the region.² The attack was against Israel making separate deals for peace with other Arab states without including Syria..³ None the less, a permanent ban on Hizbollah will be difficult for three reasons: Hizbollah has an ideological commitment, supported by Iran, to continue its fight with Israel, Hizbollah has strong social ties to the Shia community in southern Lebanon, and Hizbollah has political power.

To understand the reasons behind Hizbollah's ideological commitment to continue its fight with Israel, a historical review of the formation of Hizbollah is important. Hizbollah means Party of God and is comprised of people from the southern Lebanon's Shia community. Prior to

1970, the Shia sect was the most politically and economically oppressed community in southern Lebanon, even though by the late seventies they were the largest community in Lebanon. At the time, the Lebanese form of government was a system known as confessionalism, whereby the country's power and most importantly, resources were allotted to sects by their size.

Unfortunately for the Shias, a census was never taken to confirm that the Shia sect actually had risen to become the largest community.⁴ Ideally, under a true confessional type government the Shias would have received more resources, but instead the Shias continued to get poorer.

Added to the Shias' oppression is a factor that had started as early as 1948, when there was an influx of 100,000 Palestinian refugees from the first Arab-Israeli War. The Lebanese did not want the Palestinians at all. According to Stephen C. Pelletiere, a Middle East politics expert who is a professor at the U.S. Army's Strategic Studies Institute and author of *Assad and the Peace Process: The Pivotal Role of Lebanon*, "the Lebanese used the Palestinians as a source of cheap labor, and this persisted until the fateful period of the 1970s".⁵ In the 1970's another 100,000 Palestinians fled to Lebanon, but these came from Jordan and were different from the first group. These Palestinians were guerrillas fighting Israel from Jordanian territory. They continued their fight against Israel from bases in southern Lebanon.

Although the Palestinians were not very effective in their fighting, Israel retaliated in force. In the process of retaliation by bombing, Israel hit not only Palestinian bases but the poor Shia communities. This caused friction between the Shias and the Palestinians, but since the Shias had no power, there was nothing they could do. The Palestinians slowly began a takeover of the southern part of the country, eventually resulting in their having a "mini-state" within Lebanon.⁶ This state consisted of schools, medical facilities, and other social programs to benefit only the Palestinians--not the Lebanese, and certainly not the Shias. Pelletiere claims: "The Palestinians poached on resources of the Lebanese, but did not contribute much, if anything, to

the overall society."⁷ In addition to the Shias discontent, the other residents of southern Lebanon such as the Christians began to resent the Palestinians for bringing a war into their homeland.⁸

By 1978, Israel took advantage of the resentment by establishing strong ties, including military aide, to the Christians in southern Lebanon with the goal of stopping the Palestinians from attacking Israel. The goals changed from the Christian standpoint when the Palestinians entered the Lebanese Civil War on the side of the Muslims. The Christians, mainly the Maronites, then wanted Israel to unite with them against a common enemy--the Palestinians. The Christians also believed that Israel should unite with them because they both were minorities surrounded by hostile Muslim Arabs.⁹ Israel understood this and continued to provide military support to the Christians with the hope that the "Israel Friendly" Christians would emerge as the winner of the civil war. Israel's support of the Christians and Israel's presence in southern Lebanon added to the Shias discontent because they saw the Israeli intervention as another aggravation added to the problems caused by the Palestinians.

However, when Israel invaded southern Lebanon in 1982 to stop the Palestinians from attacking Israel, the Shias liked the idea of Israel getting rid of the Palestinian problem.¹⁰ After the United States brokered a withdrawal agreement, Israel departed from Lebanon but did not fully withdraw. It left some of its military units in southern Lebanon and proclaimed the area a security zone. Additionally, Israel created, with the Christians, the South Lebanese Army. The Shias saw this as just another occupation of their territory by an outside source.¹¹

During 1982 to 1983, Iran, a Shia Muslim nation, sent clergy into Lebanon to help the oppressed Shia brethren focus their discontent against Israel. Iran helped by forming one of the most important of the Shia groups, the Hizbollah, to fight Israel. The reason for Iran's intervention to other Muslim countries was to fulfill the Iranian Islamic Revolution's call to spread a fundamentalist Islamic Revolt. Not only did Iran form, equip, and train southern

Lebanon Shia adults to become members of Hizbollah members, it also indoctrinated the Shia youth. Judith Miller, an author and *New York Times* correspondent covering the Middle East, explains one of her experiences that demonstrates Iran's involvement in southern Lebanon:

"....Shrieking with delight, the [Lebanese] children abandoned their military drill and surrounded the "enemy" as Ali and I emerged from the taxi. Suddenly, I heard an angry voice admonishing them to stay away from me. The voice belonged to a thin young man...the village's new kindergarten teacher. He...had just returned from Iran. I smiled and asked him what the children were doing. "They are playing martyr....When they are older, they may have the honor of dying for Islam"...."¹² This reveals Iranian backed Hizbollah's strong resolve to fight Israel. By 1989, Hizbollah proved its resolve by becoming a force strong enough to attack Israeli forces through guerrilla warfare. Therefore, Hizbollah's long war and resolve to continue that war with Israel will make it difficult for Asad to disband and disavow it.

The second reason that will make it difficult for Asad to disband and disavow the Hizbollah is that the Hizbollah provides community services to the Shias in the south. Since Israel occupied the south for the purpose of establishing a security zone, supplies and services from the central government in Lebanon are non-existent in the south. In other words, the Hizbollah actually helps the Shias survive. In fact, this is one of the chief methods that Hizbollah uses to get recruits, as opposed to just Jihad ideology.¹³

Finally, Asad will have a difficult time disbanding the Hizbollah because Hizbollah has political power in Lebanon. In 1992, Sheik Fadlallah, leader of Hizbollah at the time, made the decision to enter the party in Lebanese assembly elections. Since Hizbollah provided so many social services to the large voting Shia population they did very well in the elections. The Hizbollah gained eight assembly seats which, when counted together with four other parties that shared similar views, resulted in having the largest bloc in the 128 seat assembly. This is

significant because the numerous factions in Lebanese politics.¹⁴ Hizbollah's political power, supported by its grateful Shia constituents, will help enable it to continue its fight against Israel. None the less, Asad will have to overcome this and the other difficulties for Israel to agree to return the Golan Heights.

Israel Must Leave Southern Lebanon

After Asad disbands and disavows the Hizbollah, Israel must leave southern Lebanon for two reasons. First, Israel will be fulfilling United Nation's Security Council Resolution 425, passed and adopted by the United Nation 19 March 1978. This resolution was in response to Israel's first major cross border operation to prevent Palestinians from terrorizing northern Israel. On 11 March 1978, terrorists killed forty-seven Israelis in Tel Aviv and injured a number of others. On 14 March 1978, Israel responded in an Operation called Litani whereby they entered southern Lebanon to eliminate Palestinian bases. By 19 March 1978, Israel controlled all of the territory up to the Litani River (fig. 3).¹⁵

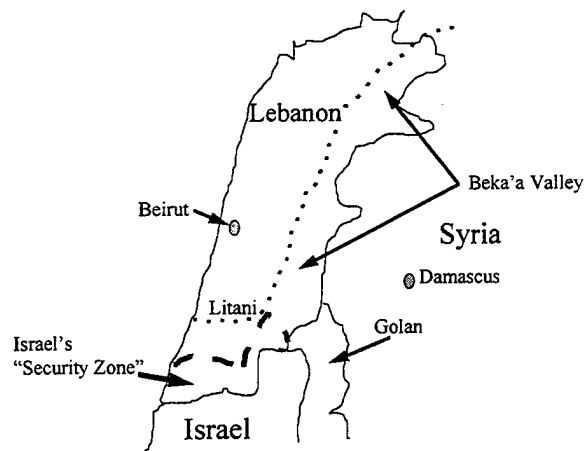


Figure 3. Israel's Security Zone

Then the United Nations issued Resolution 425. Pertinent portions of that resolution are:

1. Calls for strict respect for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon within its internationally recognized boundaries;
2. Calls upon Israel immediately to cease its military action against Lebanese territorial integrity and withdraw forthwith its forces from all Lebanese territory;
3. Decides, in the light of the request of the Government of Lebanon, to establish immediately under its authority a United Nations interim force for Southern Lebanon for the purpose of confirming the withdrawal of Israeli forces, restoring international peace and security and assisting the Government of Lebanon in ensuring the return of its effective authority in the area, the Force to be composed of personnel drawn from Member States....¹⁶

Israel stated that it would not withdraw forces until all of the terrorists left the area. Instead, the United States brokered a deal to replace Israeli troops with an interim United Nations Force as stipulated in the third point of Resolution 425. Israel did withdraw, but kept a ten mile security buffer zone in southern Lebanon (See Figure 2) thus not fulfilling the resolution.

As discussed in the previous section, Israel invaded once again on 6 June 1982 to rid the southern Lebanon area of Palestinians who continued to terrorize northern Israel and help bring about a Christian control of Lebanon. Israel's invasion went against the United Nation's Resolution, particularly points one and two which call upon Israel to respect Lebanon's independence, boundaries, politics and to cease military action. On 17 May 1983, Israel and Lebanon signed an agreement, not a peace treaty, to "respect the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of each other and to confirm that the state of war between Israel and Lebanon has been terminated and no longer exists."¹⁷ Unfortunately, on 5 March 1984 Syria made Lebanon revoke the agreement because it thought Israel should withdraw unconditionally.¹⁸ Nonetheless, Israel's security zone continues to violate UN policy.

The second reason Israel should depart Lebanon is its presence there is not necessary to combat forces in southern Lebanon. Israel is quite capable of using its artillery and attack aircraft to retaliate. Otherwise, Israel's continued presence in southern Lebanon will only aggravate tensions in the region. As discussed earlier, Israel's presence in southern Lebanon

made the region ripe for anti-Israel sentiment.¹⁹ Thus, Israel's departure from southern Lebanon should help stabilize the region as long as Syria prevents Hizbollah from attacking Israel.

Israel Will Have to Let Syria Remain in Lebanon

Israel will have to agree to Syrian military presence in Lebanon simply because Asad will agree to nothing less. Asad wants to maintain influence in Lebanon for three reasons: Asad wants to realize the "Greater Syria" concept, he has a deep political foundation in Lebanon, and Syria has strong economic ties to Lebanon.

As stated in the introduction to this thesis, Syria used to be larger than it is today. Asad claims that Damascus was a center of influence that reached into Lebanon, Transjordan, Palestine.²⁰ Therefore those lands, in addition to Syria, make up "Greater Syria". After World War I, the French and British were given territories of what was the Ottoman Empire with the purpose of establishing mandates. The French took a piece of "Greater Syria", Lebanon, that was largely Christian and made it a separate entity in order to offset the balance of power among the neighboring Muslim countries. France remained in control of Lebanon and Syria until the United States and Britain took away France's claim when it sided with Germany at the onset of World War II. Lebanon became independent after the war.

Many years later, Syria lost its most important anti-Israel ally when Egypt signed a peace treaty with Israel. The impact of the loss of the Egyptian alliance was lessened when Syria moved into Lebanon during its civil war. This move, over time, has essentially made Lebanon a surrogate to Syria--once again re-establishing a larger portion of Greater Syria for Asad, if not officially, certainly in practice. Syria does not even provide diplomats to Lebanon because it views Lebanon as part of Syria. Today, Syria influences most of Lebanon's policies.²¹

Asad's deep political foundation began when Syria's military entered Lebanon in 1976, during the Lebanese Civil War, at the request of the Christian faction. The Christians were

losing the war to the various Muslim factions who were fighting for their political, social, and economic rights. Syria entered in order to keep Lebanon an Arab state and all minorities, including Christians, could live in peace. Asad did not want a partitioned Lebanon because that would threaten Syria--particularly if one of those partitions was the Christian faction with alliances to Israel.²² However, in 1982 Asad changed his support to the Muslim factions when Israel attacked Lebanon to destroy Palestinian bases. As Israel made its advance north toward Beirut, they clashed with the Syrian army. After many casualties, the United States brokered a truce. Israel left but maintained its security zone and Syria stayed in the Beka'a Valley.²³ From there, the Syrian military could protect its western flank as well as control what goes in and out of southern Lebanon.

The political foundation then began to take hold. There were two Shia Muslim groups that wanted to fight Israel: Amal and Hizbollah. Because these two groups were bitter enemies themselves, Asad got them to set aside their differences in order to focus their fight against Israel. The leader of the Amal group was Nabih Berri who eventually rose quite high in the Lebanese Parliament. Asad's support of Berri enabled Syria to influence politics in Lebanon.²⁴ Most Lebanese political decisions today must get Asad's approval. Just one example of Syria's influence over Lebanon politics was Syria insistence that Lebanon revoke its agreement with Israel over the 1982 War. It is doubtful Asad will ever give up his deep involvement in Lebanese politics.

The last reason that Israel must permit Asad's commitment in Lebanon is Syria's and Lebanon's economies have become more integrated. In fact, Syria's economy has improved during its presence in Lebanon. For example, trade between Syria and Lebanon is around 90 million dollars a year.²⁵ Some of that is due to the 300,000 Syrian citizens that Lebanon employed to help with the civil war reconstruction. Additionally, Lebanese travel to Syria to

purchase goods at a lower costs than at home which stimulates Syrian economy. On the shady side of the economics issue, Syrian officers in Lebanon make huge profits off the illegal drug trade. Also, a number of Syrian officials sit on Lebanese business boards, where they take some of the profit.²⁶ The bottom line is Syria and Lebanon have an economic union that makes it difficult, if not impossible, for Asad to change.

Conclusion

This chapter analyzed the most important condition that must be met in order for Israel to return the Golan Heights to Syria: Asad must enforce peace in southern Lebanon. In order for that to occur, Asad will have to disavow and stop supporting the Hizbollah's attacks against Israel. Once Hizbollah has been neutralized, Israel will have to depart its security zone in southern Lebanon, which is a primary source of the deadly friction. Last, because of Asad's perceived need for Greater Syria, deep political foundation in Lebanon, and economics, Israel will have to live with Syrian presence in Lebanon.

NOTES

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21. Miller, 250-289.
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- 24..Ibid., 77.
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CHAPTER FIVE

REINITIATION OF TALKS

Israel and Syria must resume their talks that took place from 1991 to 1996 for two reasons. First, the longer the two sides remain away from the negotiating table, the least likely they are to solve the Golan Heights issue peacefully. The second reason is that Israel and Syria need to recapture the progress made during the 1991-1996 negotiations before it fades from the memories of the key players. Those negotiations progressed through a number of phases each of which produced positive results, and in some instances, identified major points of disagreement.

Before discussing those phases, it is important to establish the official public stance that Israel and Syria maintained with regard to the Golan Heights. Syria, realizing that it could not achieve strategic military parity with Israel, began looking for a diplomatic way to solve the Golan issue but on its own terms. Asad stated those official terms in late July 1991 as: "We [emphasize] that peace must be based on United Nations Resolutions [242 and 338]."¹ This was the first time Asad indicated that he would recognize Israel's right to exist but only after Israel's return of the Golan Heights. In other words, Asad argued for "Land for Peace."

The Israeli stance in 1991 was much less flexible. Israeli Prime Minister Shamir made a statement in late July 1991:

The Syrians will tell us that they want the Golan Heights and we shall tell them No!....Undoubtedly the Golan Heights is part of Israel....This is the government's position....Resolution 242 has nothing to do with the Golan....If the Syrians were to bring up....the subject of withdrawal from the Golan Heights, they should know our answer.²

Clearly, Israel's stance was there would be no return of the Golan Heights to Syria.

The Phases and The Positive Results

The first phase that produced positive results was the break in the Israeli-Syrian stalemate. In 1991, when the United States and the Russia sponsored a peace conference among the key Arab countries and Israel. The peace conference began on 30 October 1991 in Madrid

with the following parties represented: Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt and the Palestinians. During the opening ceremonies, a number of high level officials from the countries participating gave speeches. President George Bush commented that peace meant Israel's security but at the same time said that compromise on territories was also critical. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir stated that the Arab-Israeli conflict was not about land but more about Arabs not wanting to recognize Israel. Syria's Foreign Minister Farouk Al-Sharaa stated that UN Resolutions 242 and 338 should be implemented.³

At first glance it appears that all parties engaged in the same old discussion points: Israel wants peace and Syria wants the Golan returned, then peace. This first phase did, however, produce two positive results. First, Israel and Syria entered into a dialogue by attending the conference--something that had not occurred directly in over twenty years. Second, both agreed to enter into bilateral talks. Although the first bilateral talks in December 1991 resulted in both Israel and Syria restating their positions, at least the talks demonstrated both sides were willing to discuss their differences.⁴

A change in the Israeli stance over the Golan Heights marked the beginning of the second phase that produced positive results. That phase occurred from June 1992 to August 1992 under the direction of the newly elected Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. On the eve of his election, Rabin made public comments that indicated he was willing to return some of the Golan Heights to Syria in exchange for peace. This was a reversal of Rabin's previous attitude towards Syria. As recent as 1990, Rabin's stance had been that he would never support giving up the Golan Heights even in a peace treaty with Syria.⁵

The reversal must have been because of Rabin's realization that in order to have peace with Syria, Israel would have to give up most if not all of the Golan Heights. Rabin said, "Asad will not settle for less than what Sadat got."⁶ This was the first time the Israeli government

acknowledged that it would have to give up the Golan Heights much like it gave up the Sinai in exchange for peace. Thus, the negotiations began to pick up steam. Rabin put Itmar Rabinovich, the Israeli Ambassador to Washington, in charge of the Israeli negotiating team. Syria's team was also headed by its Ambassador to the United States, Walid al-Muallim.

This phase produced two positive results. First, on 24 August 1992, Rabinovich announced that Israel considered United Nations Resolutions 242 and 338 applied to the Golan Heights. Second, a Syrian law school dean told the Washington Institute for Near East Policy that Syria would give Israel the peace it wants such as recognition, diplomatic exchange, economic and social cooperation, and normalization of relations. Although this was not an official dialogue, the dean probably would not have made those comments without official permission⁷

The major point of disagreement during this phase centered on how much of the Golan must Israel return. Israel did not want to give up the entire Golan. It wanted to keep some of its settlements on the Golan as well as direct control of the Golan waters. Syria wanted nothing less than a complete Israeli withdrawal to the pre-1967 war boundary⁸

Reports that Rabin considered giving up the entire Golan marked the beginning of the third phase that produced one positive result. This phase occurred after a slowdown in negotiations due to the transition in US Presidents and the Arab world's response to Israel's expulsion of Hamas activists, from May to August 1993. Rabin began talking as if he would agree to giving up the entire Golan in exchange for full peace with Syria. However, the negotiating teams of both countries remained in stalemate. Israel was not prepared to officially say "full withdrawal" and Syria was not prepared to say "full peace."⁹ The positive result was there was a "hint" that Israel was considering giving up the entire Golan Heights.¹⁰

The next phase, January 1994 to April 1994, that produced positive results began when Israel and rest of the world heard Asad's optimism and desire for peace. Asad expressed his optimism in January 1994 when he and President Clinton met in Geneva. According to the U.S. Department of State Dispatch, Asad stated the following:

....I hope that our meeting today will contribute to the realization of the aspirations of the peoples of the region; mainly, that this new year will be the year of achieving a just and comprehensive peace which puts an end to the tragedies of violence and wars endured by them several decades...that peace cannot be genuine and lasting unless it is comprehensive and based on the principles of international legitimacy and justice...This means endeavoring to reach a just solution on all tracks.¹¹

The first positive result of this phase was perhaps one of the most important because it made the world feel as though the Israel-Syria talks initiated in 1991 were making progress.

The second positive result surfaced in April of 1994 when U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher mediated proposals between Rabin and Asad. Rabin's proposal had five major components:

1. Israel would withdraw in three stages over period of five to eight years which would match Syrian phases in establishing normal peace relations.
2. In the first stage Israel would give up a small portion of the Golan. In exchange, Syria and Israel would establish diplomatic channels to include trading ambassadors.
3. In the second stage, Israel would evacuate all of the Israeli settlements. In exchange, Syria and Israel would establish full normalization.
4. In the third stage, Israel would complete its full withdrawal.
5. Israel would get security guarantees such as the establishment of a Demilitarized Zone; establishment of disarmament zones that favor Israel; creation of early warning stations; and the establishment of an international peace keeping force.¹²

Syria rejected this proposal and gave Christopher the following counter-proposal:

1. Israel must agree that the Golan Heights belongs to Syria.
2. Israel must quickly withdraw from the Golan Heights. Then Syria would make full peace with Israel.
3. Peace with Israel must be comprehensive in that it must be part of the entire Arab-Israeli peace plan.
4. There must be equal disarmament zones.
5. After Israeli withdrawal, Syria would be ready to discuss diplomacy and economics.¹³

What is positive about these proposals, although rejected by both countries, is that for the first time the gap between Israel's and Syria's position was closing. The proposals not only demonstrate major points of disagreement but they also show a theme of agreement: Israel will return the Golan Heights and Syria will offer peace.

The need to have military experts involved in the mechanics of security arrangements brought about the next phase. That phase began in September 1994 when Syrian Ambassador Muallim gave Rabinovich another document that discussed Syrian views on withdrawal phases, security arrangements, and type of normalization. Both came to the conclusion that the process needed to be handed down to the senior military leadership of both countries in order to work out the finer details of security arrangements. Unfortunately, the first meeting between the Chiefs of Staffs of Israel and Syria, held in late December 1994, did not go well because of the lack of political goals that any military agreements would need to support. However, the positive result of this phase was that both sides realized political and military goals were interrelated and agreed to a pause to give the civilian leaders time to work out a political framework for future technical talks on security.¹⁴

The pause led to the next phase that produced a document that contained Israeli and Syrian political goals. From March 1995 to May 1995, Prime Minister Rabin and Syrian Foreign

Minister Farouq Shara reached an agreement on a document known as "Aims and Principles of the Security Arrangements." That document remains secret but is reported to have the verbal approval of Rabin and Asad.¹⁵ The positive result of this occasion was that the two Chiefs of Staff had the political guidance to develop technical solutions for security.

The phase that looked very promising occurred from March 1995 to October 1995 when it appeared that Syria was agreeable to some of Israel's security demands. Israeli Army Chief of Staff, General Amnon Shahaq, and Syrian Army Chief of Staff, General Shihabi met a number of times to discuss three key security issues: demilitarization and disarmament zones, early warning capabilities, and the role of international forces.¹⁶ These discussions produced positive results. First, both Syria and Israel agreed on the need for disarmament and DMZs. However, they argued over the disarmament ratios. Israel wanted a 9:1 ratio of forces with Israel having the advantage. Syria, reportedly, considered changing its position on equal disarmament zones by offering a 10:6 ratio in favor of Israel.¹⁷ The point is that Syria for the first time appeared agreeable to allowing Israel to have more forces on its side of the border than Syria. They just could not agree on the ratio.¹⁸ The second result was both countries agreed to the idea of each country needing a early warning capability. Israel insisted on maintaining its station on Mount Hermon whereas Syria insisted that Israel use other means such as satellites and planes. The point is both sides agreed to continue searching for a solution in this area. The last result was both countries agreed on the need of an international force to occupy the DMZ. However, Syria preferred to have a UN force whereas Israel preferred to have a US led force.¹⁹ The positive note here is that no sources have been found that suggest that Syria would replace the word "prefer" with stronger, less flexible language such as "insist."

Tragedy brought about the last phase that lasted from November 1995 to April 1996. The tragedy was the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Rabin. A number of people thought

the assassination would have immediately derailed the talks. However, this did not happen. Rabin's replacement, Shimon Peres, agreed to continue the talks. Helena Cobban, author of *Syria and the Peace: A Good Chance Missed*, quotes a source close to Peres, "Peres was sure that he would be campaigning in the elections with a Syrian peace accord in his pocket. 'We will have peace with Syria within six months, he said.'²⁰ The scope of the talks increased to both political and military levels as early as December of 1995. In January of 1996, Syria and Israel held high level discussions at the Wye Plantation in Maryland. In fact, both agreed to continue the discussions every month.²¹ There were two positive results of this phase. First, Israel demonstrated its commitment to continue talks even after the death of Rabin. Second, regardless of some the negative reports from Syria and Israel that the conferences were not that productive, Israel and Syria had come a long way in resolving their differences by establishing a series of conferences to address the issues. The major issues not addressed in great detail during this phase or any other phase were Israel's need to continue getting the Golan's waters and Syria's need to keep peace in southern Lebanon.

In spring of 1996, that phase, as well as the entire Israeli-Syrian peace process, came to a screeching halt for two reasons: First, the Arab world was in an uproar over Israeli Operation Grapes of Wrath, a massive bombing campaign against Lebanon for the Hizbollah's attack on Israel.²² Second, Peres and Labor lost the elections to Netanyahu and Likud--those against "Land for Peace."

Conclusion

This chapter analyzed the Israeli-Syrian negotiations that at the time seemed to hold favorable prospects for lasting peace in the region. The positive results and points of disagreement identified in this chapter may not all seem substantive but they formed part of a

structure for a solution for peace. To summarize this chapter, the following list highlights the positive results and points of disagreement:

1. Israel and Syria demonstrated the capability to officially discuss the return of the Golan Heights to Syria.
2. Israel indicated it could give up the Golan Heights in return for full peace with Syria. However, Syria wants Israel to withdraw rapidly whereas Israel wants to withdraw in phases.
3. Syria indicated that Israel could have more forces on the Israeli-Syria border than Syria. However, the negotiators could not agree on the ratio.
4. Israel and Syria agreed to the principle of the presence of an international force to monitor peace agreements. However, Israel wanted the United States to provide the force and Syria disagreed with that proposal, opting for a United Nations Force.
5. Syria recognized Israel's need for early warning. However, Syria did not agree to allowing Israel to keep a monitoring stations on Mount Hermon.

What was not addressed in great detail from 1991 to 1996 was Israel's demand that Asad stop Hizbollah from launching their deadly attacks on Israel. This condition and the points outlined above provide part of the structure for a solution for peace as outlined in the next chapter.

NOTES

1. Moshe Ma'oz, *Syria and Israel: From War to Peacemaking* (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1995), 208.

2. Ibid., 215.

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4. Helena Cobban, *Syria and the Peace: A Good Chance Missed* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1997), 4.

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7. Ibid., 226.

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9. Ibid., 234.

10. Ibid., 225.

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12. Ma'oz, 247.

13. Ibid.

14. Coban, 9.

15. Ibid., 10.

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21. Ibid., 21.

22. Ibid., 11-31.

CHAPTER SIX

A SOLUTION

This chapter provides a possible solution for the problem of Israel's return of the Golan Heights to Syria, taking into account the conditions that must be in place before hand. The solution outlined in this chapter twists the strategy of Land for Peace to Peace for Land. In other words, Syria has to demonstrate its commitment to peace before Israel returns the Golan Heights.

Israel and Syria will have to overcome history and politics and start laying the foundation for mutual trust. Israel will have to gain Syria's trust by agreeing to give up the Golan Heights, and Syria will have to gain Israel's trust by agreeing to impose peace in southern Lebanon. Once the leaders of Israel and Syria agree to this, the negotiating teams can resume work on a solution. Perhaps the solution outlined in this chapter is a good starting point.

There are six major components to the solution:

1. Syria ensures peace in southern Lebanon
2. Syria and Israel each establish early warning monitoring sites on each others territory.
3. Syria and Israel establish joint control over water projects in the Golan and Turkey supplies region water via the "Peace Canal"
4. Israel conducts a phased withdrawal from the Golan Heights
5. Israel and Syria establish a partial Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) and Disarmament Zones with Israel getting asymmetrical boundaries
6. Israel and Syria establish normal relations

The Major Components

Peace in southern Lebanon

The first and most important component is for Syria to enforce peace in southern Lebanon. As discussed in Chapter Four, this, and not the Golan, is the place where people are

dying today, as well as the launch point for Hizbollah's attacks into Israel. Therefore, if Syria can achieve peace in Lebanon, Israel is likely to feel less threatened--a dynamic discussed in Chapter One. The relative security in turn will spur public opinion in support of the remaining components of the solution. From the Syrian standpoint, if Asad packages this portion of a Golan peace agreement properly he can still represent to his people that he did not give in to Israel--a dynamic also discussed in Chapter One. He can claim that he gets to maintain an Arab force, as the following discussion brings out, in Lebanon. There are four tasks to this component:

1. Syria must disarm, disband, and disavow Hizbollah groups in southern Lebanon
2. Syria and Lebanon must provide a joint force down to the north boundary of the security zone after Israel departs southern Lebanon
3. The United Nations (UN) must provide a Disengagement Observer Force (DOF) to monitor Israel, Syria, and Lebanon
4. With the DOF monitoring, Syria and Lebanon must maintain a quiet period

To start down the road to peace in southern Lebanon, Syria would have to first disarm Hizbollah and any other anti-Israel terrorist group in Lebanon, and prevent them from ever operating in Lebanon and western Syria. As Chapter Four discusses, Lebanon will not be able to disarm the Hizbollah without repercussions. However, it is possible that Syria and Lebanon could jointly disarm the Hizbollah.

To prevent Hizbollah from being rearmed, Syria would have to position forces in the Beka'a Valley to block arms shipment from Iran to the Hizbollah. Syria will have a difficult time persuading Iran not to re-establish control of Hizbollah and their fight with Israel. Even though the Hizbollah are Lebanese Shia citizens, its important to remember Iranian Revolutionaries founded the party and it is Iran's way of continuing the revolutionary struggle. Chapter One

discusses why it would be risky for Asad, in light of his opposition at home, if he has to break formal ties with Iran and resort to force to keep Iran out of southern Lebanon. It is possible that Hizbollah will attempt to resist with force. However, if this task is successful, Asad would prove to Israel that he remains fully committed to peace, particularly if he does confront Iran. Additionally, Syria or Lebanon will have to replace Hizbollah's social services it provides, discussed in chapter four, to the local Shia community.

The second task, after Israel's departure from southern Lebanon, would be the establishment of a joint Lebanese-Syrian force that would operate in the south down to what is now the northern boundary of the so called security zone (fig. 4). As discussed in Chapter Four, Syria for all intents and purposes controls Lebanon and what the Lebanese do in southern Lebanon. The Lebanese government may not see the Syrian military playing a part in "policing" southern Lebanon as breaching Lebanese sovereignty. It is probable that Syria's military operating in the south will be seen as retaining the status quo, since Syria has significant forces and control in Lebanon anyway. What is different is that it would be a joint effort between Syria and Lebanon in maintaining peace. This would also give Asad, or whoever replaces him, an 'excuse' to retain a larger military. Lebanon's benefit in this proposal is regaining control of its own territory.

The third task is for the UN to establish a DOF that would operate in the DMZ. This DOF would have the same charter and power as the Golan's UNDOF, essentially monitoring, inspecting, and reporting violations of any disengagement agreement(s).¹ The primary disengagement rule would have to center around the absence of Lebanese, Israeli, or Syrian military forces in the DMZ. The risk to both Israel and Syria is that the DOF may not be successful in dealing with terrorists in the DMZ. These terrorists might strike Israel, while

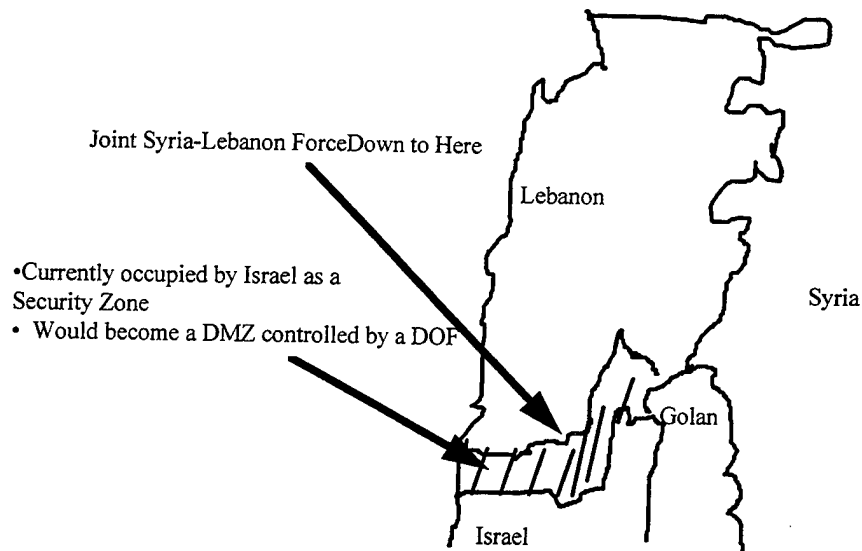


Figure 4. Proposal for Peace with Lebanon

Lebanon and Syria get the blame and brunt of Israeli retaliation. A similar situation exists today in the West Bank because the Palestinian police cannot control terrorist attacks against Israel

There is an historical basis that supports this part of the solution. After the 1973 war the United Nations established an organization called the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF). Its mission has been to monitor and ensure compliance of the 1974 disengagement agreement between Israel and Syria on the Golan.² This force is about 1350 strong and contains one Austrian infantry battalion, one Polish infantry battalion, one Canadian unit that provides logistical and communications support, and one group that augments the UNDOF called the Observer Group Golan (OGG). The United States does not participate.³

Figure 5 shows the UNDOF area of operations. UNDOF patrols and monitors, via observation posts, the Area of Separation (AOS). The OGG sends its personnel further east and west to ensure that Israel and Syria live up to force limitations found in the Disengagement Agreement. Over the years, most of the infractions have been minor and solved on the ground.⁴

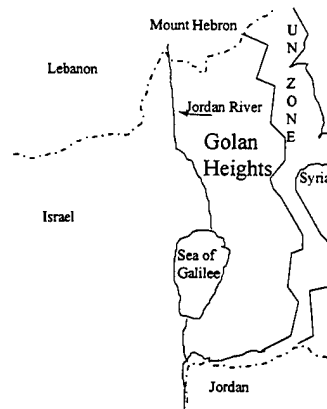


Figure 5. UNDOF Area of Operations

This task will depend more on Israeli-Syrian desires for peace than any UNDOF contributions. Most experts view the UNDOF mission as a success. However, the Washington Institute Study Group report argues that UNDOF has not brought peace between Israel and Syria. The report asserts that success is only because Syria and Israel allow it.⁵ The report summarizes the UNDOF as: "....comparable to a well-intentioned but poorly equipped policeman covering a beat in a very tough neighborhood: tolerated with good humor by residents who, having armed themselves to the teeth, are more than capable of defending themselves against the next outbreak of lawlessness."⁶ The UNDOF, even though it may be a "poorly equipped policeman," helps facilitate peace by providing a structure that deals with the minor infractions.

The fourth task would be Syria's and Lebanon's institution of a quiet period in southern Lebanon, during which there would be no major incidents such as hostile fire, terrorism, etc. The Washington Institute Report suggests that the quiet period should last six months.⁷ It is not certain how the writers of that report derived that figure, but it will take some time for Syria and Lebanon to prove their ability to maintain peace in the region on a permanent basis. Agreements over length of time will be difficult to achieve. Israel will want more time whereas Syria will

want less. The longer it takes to have full period of time without a major incident, the longer it would take to implement the next component of the solution, which begins in the Golan area.

Early Warning and Monitoring Stations

That component is the establishment of early warning monitoring sites for both Israel and Syria. As discussed in Chapter Two, Israel and Syria need the ability to verify each other's commitment to any peace agreement. Israel would retain sites on Mount Hermon whereas Syria would establish a site on the Huleh plain in Israel. Then the UN would establish a site that would monitor both forces. With the exception of Syria having a monitoring station on Israeli soil, there is a historical basis that supports Israel's retention of monitoring sites on Syrian soil, the 1975 scenario which helped achieve peace between Israel and Egypt.

In August of 1975 the United States produced an organization called the Sinai Field Mission (SFM). The SFM sought to help both Egypt and Israel overcome fears of being invaded by each other by surprise. The United States proposed that each establish monitoring stations along the key terrain along the Sinai invasion routes. Egypt allowed Israel to man a monitoring station in Egypt's Sinai desert. The United States positioned observers-- 170 State Department employees and civilian contractors--to monitor Egyptian and Israeli compliance with the various disengagement agreements.⁸

The SFM did such an outstanding job that most people give it credit for being the start point for implementation of the 1979 peace treaty.⁹ For various reasons the United Nations could not implement the initial peacekeeping mission. Therefore, the United States took the lead in developing the SFM replacement organization known as the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO).¹⁰ The MFO consists of 700 civilians and 2000 soldiers. The soldiers are found in three light infantry battalions that have no heavy weapons. One battalion is from Colombia, one from Fiji, and one from the United States. Slightly less than one half of the 2700 members are from

the United States. The MFO stretches 375 kms across the Sinai.¹¹ Since 1982 and as of 1994, the MFO has done an excellent job of preventing war by acting as a buffer and referee between two previously belligerent countries.. The MFO claims that not a single shot has been fired since 1982.

Because the MFO military capability is weak, it would not be hard for Israel and Egypt to attack each other if they wanted. What has been key in helping maintain peace is that that both countries wanted peace. In fact they each have direct funding and management involvement in the MFO operations.¹² However, the Washington Institute's Study Group report accurately states key reasons for the MFO success: "....Furthermore, the Sinai's relative insignificance as a population center, source of important natural resources, or center of economic activity simplifies peacekeeping there. Where there are few complicating side issues, peacekeeping becomes easier."¹³

It will be difficult for Asad to allow Israel to have a early warning and monitoring station on Syrian soil. Asad's opponents might see Israeli presence on Syrian soil as a breach in sovereignty. As Chapter One explains, Asad is always mindful of his opponents. It is possible Asad would be able to argue that Syria has a presence in Israel for the same reason: early warning. Since Egypt, an Arab nation, has been able to work with Israel for over twenty years, there might be room for Asad to convince his people that it can be done. See figure 6 for the monitoring station proposals.

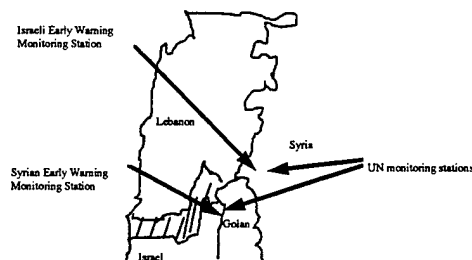


Figure 6. Early Warning Monitoring Stations

Water

The next component--water allocation--is unavoidable. As Chapter Three demonstrates, Israel needs the water that flows from the Golan in order to survive. The first option is for Syria and Israel to agree to the type of solution that exists between Israel and Jordan.¹⁴ The Israel-Jordan Peace Treaty implemented on 26 October 1994 contains language that guarantees both countries access to regional water. The following is an excerpt from that peace treaty that could be mirrored in any agreement between Israel and Syria:

Article 6. Water. With the view to achieving a comprehensive and lasting settlement of all water problems between them: 1. The Parties agree mutually to recognize the rightful allocations of both of them....2. The Parties, recognising the necessity to find a practical, just and agreed solution....3....More water should be supplied for their use through various methods, including projects of regional and international cooperation. 4....cooperation in water related subjects would be to the benefit of both parties....¹⁵

The agreement outlined above would support Israeli-Syrian cooperation over the second option for water: Turkey's "Peace Canal." The late President Ozal proposed that Turkey would provide Israel and its neighbors water from its plentiful water reserves such as the Ataturk Reservoir. The Peace Canal would supply 1.1 billion cubic meters of water a year from Turkey's water sources to Israel, Syria, Jordan, and the Palestinians at a total cost of about 1.5 million dollars a year.¹⁶ Syria and Israel would each get 275 million cubic meters per year that it could use or store in reservoirs. The water would travel in two underground pipelines from Turkey to western Syria. One of the pipelines would stop in Syria and the other would traverse the Golan then drop into the Jordan River (fig.7).¹⁷ The Peace Canal is a great idea to get water into the region, but there are some challenges. First, Syria could still influence Israel's water supply by not allowing the Turkey-Israel pipeline to traverse Syrian territory or disrupt the water flow once the pipes are in place. Second, Turkey's leadership has not always been friendly to Israel. For example, from July 1996 to June 1997, Turkey's Prime Minister, Necmettin Erbakan, was a

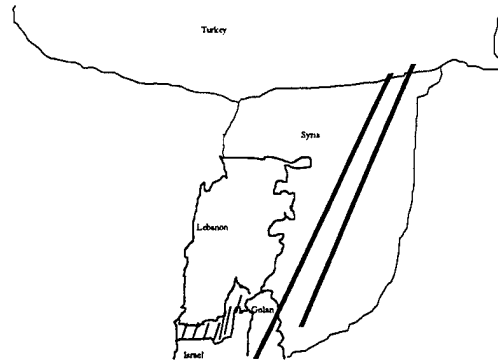


Figure 7. Peace Canal Pipelines

Muslim who was anti-Israel for religious reasons. Fortunately, Erbakan was an isolated case of Turkish anti-Israel sentiment. Additionally, the Turkish military, which exerts a strong influence on government policies, favors strong ties to Israel.¹⁸

Phased Withdrawal

Once Syria and Israel resolve the water issue, Israel would withdraw from the Golan in phases. The first phase would be to locate replacement livelihoods for those whose living is tied to the land of the Golan. The second phase would be to locate homes in Israel proper that would house the displaced citizens.

Demilitarized Zones and Disarmament Zones

Once those two phases are complete, Israel and Syria would begin the next component: Establish DMZ and Disarmament Zones. The entire Golan would have to become a DMZ with one exception: Syria should be allowed to position a brigade size force on the Golan in order to exert sovereignty. Then the current western boundary of the United Nations Disengagement Observers Force (UNDOF) would expand to what would be the new Israeli-Syrian border (fig. 8). The size of the UNDOF force would then have to increase considerably to cover territory that increased by a factor of four. Instead of 1,350 personnel it may require up to 5,400.

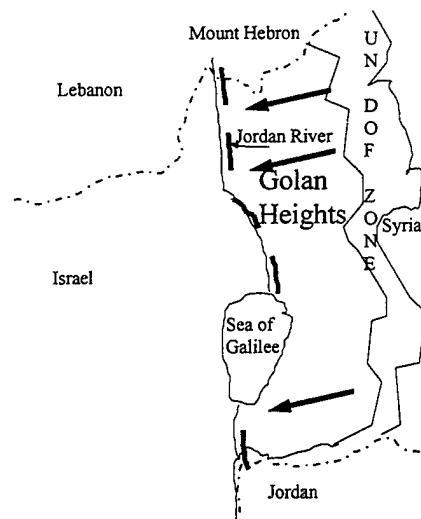


Figure 8. New UNDOF Boundary

Tied to the DMZ would be Disarmament Zones. Figure 9 reflects the current disarmament zones. "B" represents a maximum allowable ten kilometer military strength zone of 75 tanks, 36 artillery pieces, and 6,000 troops. "A" represents a maximum allowable ten kilometer military strength zone of 450 tanks and 152 artillery pieces.¹⁹

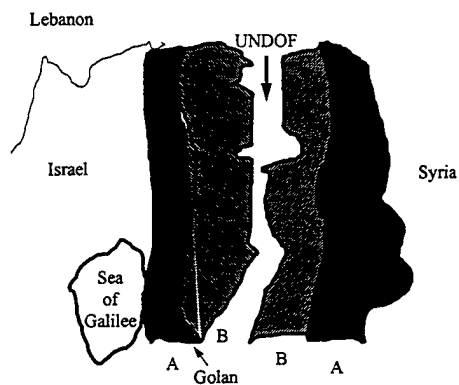


Figure 9. Current Disarmament Zones

The new Disarmament Zones would change in that Israel and Syria would have no forces on the Golan with the exception of Syria's brigade size force; the UNDOF area would include all of the shaded areas depicted in figure 9; Syria would move its current zones, as shown in figure 9, to the east as depicted in figure 10; and Israel would have no other disarmament zones--in other words Israel could mass sufficient forces on the new Israeli-Syrian border to deter Syrian aggression (fig. 10).

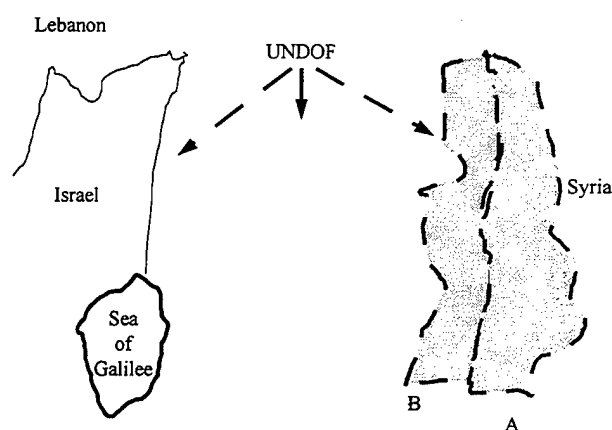


Figure 10. New Disarmament Zones

Chapter Two provides the basis for this proposal. Israel moves its forces completely off the Golan while Syria, with the exception of a brigade size force, moves its forces with the current limitations further to the east. Because Israel loses strategic depth, the proposal allows for it to have a strong deterrent force on its new boundary. This means Israel would not have force limitations. On the other hand, Syria would be giving Israel a buffer because not only does Syria have to move its forces further east, it also has to maintain the same force limitations as stipulated in the current disarmament zones. This allows Syria to retain its current military strength oriented against Israel, but because Israel is now at a terrain disadvantage (e.g., would

have to fight uphill) the separation of Syrian to Israeli forces must increase. Israel would have to live with the fact that the same number of Syrian forces remain poised against it as under the current Golan arrangement. However, under this proposal Syrian forces would be further away.. Additionally, this part of the solution would tie into the early warning needs in that separation distances and associated disarmament zones buy time for both countries to react to land invasion attempts. The key obstacle to this part of the solution is, as Chapter Five discusses, both sides had trouble agreeing to a ratio.

Normal Relations

The final component to this particular solution is the establishment of normal relations between Israel and Syria. Normalization would begin by establishing diplomatic ties that would include exchanging ambassadors. However, Israel will have to settle for a little less than "full peace" because, as Chapter One discusses, Asad cannot offer the kind of peace Israel wants--the kind that includes economic agreements. There is precedent for Israel to agree to this, because even today there are no strong economic ties between Egypt and Israel.

United States Involvement

Before concluding it is important to note that some of the solution components above require troops, equipment, and money. As discussed in Chapter 5, Israel prefers that the United States be in charge of the peacekeeping whereas Syria prefers UN personnel. The United States should assist in negotiations. After Syria and Israel complete negotiations, the UN should implement the agreements with funds and troops. If at any time Israel and Syria demand further United States participation in order for the peace process to continue, then and only then should the United States consider committing funds and its troops. The following discussion supports that conclusion.

The issue of the United States involvement is a consideration that surfaces during discussions on peace in the Middle East. The United States National Security Strategy concerning the Middle East since World War II has consistently been the security of Israel, keeping the former Soviet Union from having an influence in the region, maintaining access to the oil produced by the Gulf States, attaining access to more Middle Eastern markets, and more freedom of navigation within the Gulf.²⁰ In the late seventies, Iran emerged as a major threat to United States interest. Then in the early nineties the Soviet Union collapsed but at almost the same time, Iraq became another major threat.

In May 1997, the President of the United States outlined his strategies for the region:

1. Continued Israeli-Palestinian engagement on remaining issues in the Interim Agreement, and negotiation of permanent status issues;
2. Resuming Israeli-Syrian negotiations and beginning Israeli-Lebanese negotiations with the objective of achieving peace treaties; and
3. Normalization of relations between Arab states.²¹

The bottom line for U.S. interests on the Golan issue is that if Syria makes peace with Israel, then there would be one less major conflict that negatively impacts on U.S. interests, particularly economics. U.S. businesses would be that much closer to having more desirable access to the Middle East market place if they did not have to worry about war destroying their investments.

Whether or not the United States becomes fully involved depends on what will make peace between Israel and Syria happen. If the United States funds the peace process it would cost US tax payers an additional twelve billion dollars: seven billion dollars for military equipment, three billion dollars for water projects, and two billion dollars for the relocation of Israelis off the Golan.²² If Israel does not back down from its desires to have United States forces in the area, then the dispatch of troops to Lebanon and the Golan will be necessary.

However, funds and troops will be difficult for the United States to obtain because current politics and public opinion probably would not support such a venture.

Conclusion

This chapter dealt with a possible solution for peace between Israel and Syria by combining initiatives that were successful in the region with some new ideas. This solution is possible if the key obstacles can be overcome. First, Asad will more than likely have to use force against Hizbollah in order to stop it from attacking Israel. That will be difficult given Asad's previous support of Hizbollah and the fact he would break a paradigm by using force against fellow Arabs to Israel's benefit. Second, Israel will have to allow Syria to remain involved in Lebanon. Perhaps that will not be so difficult for Israel given the role Syria would be playing. Third, both Israel and Syria will have to agree to each imposing on the other's territorial sovereignty by allowing the establishment of early warning and monitoring sites. That will be difficult for both Syria and Israel given that they were once enemies. Fourth, Syria will have to change its stance on the Golan waters by ensuring Israel's access to those waters. Fifth, Syria will have to change its position and allow Israel to withdraw from the Golan in phases instead of immediately. Sixth, Syria will have to give Israel the advantage of having no force limitations on the Israeli-Syrian border while Syria endures strict force limitations further away from the border. This will be one of the most difficult obstacles to overcome unless Asad can equate his sacrifices to that of Israel when it loses key, defensive terrain when it gives up the Golan Heights. Lastly, Israel will have to settle for something short of full peace by not having economic ties to Syria.

NOTES

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3. Ibid., 25.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid., 19.
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9. Ibid., 27.
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CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

This thesis answered the research question: What are the conditions that must be met in order for Israel to give up the Golan Heights and maintain security? Those conditions are: Israel and Syria must overcome history and politics; Israel must get asymmetrical disarmament zones; Syria and Israel must each have early warning stations; Israel must have a phased withdrawal from the Golan Heights; Syria must not interrupt water flow from the Golan Heights rivers; President Asad of Syria must instill peace in southern Lebanon; and Syria and Israel must reinstitute talks.

Chapter six of this thesis provides a solution for some of the more technical problems involved of giving up the Golan Heights. However, Chapter six did not provide solutions to the underlying factors that history, public opinion, politics and personalities pose on peace between Syria and Israel. These factors reduce the prospects for peace.

As chapter one states, the current Israeli leader, Netanyahu, and his Likud government still maintain that the Golan will not be given back to Syria. For now, Israeli public opinion supports this stance. However, chapter one provides the hope that once the Israeli public feels less threatened, it may be more agreeable to giving up land in exchange for peace. Public opinion alone is not what will cause Israel to give up the Golan Heights. Chapter one discusses the need for Israel to have a leader who can transcend party doctrine and make peace with Syria as Begin did with Egypt.

Alternatively, Israel needs a leader and Knesset willing to go against public opinion, risking life if necessary, in order to achieve peace with Syria as Rabin attempted until his assassination. Unless Netanyahu's hard-line stance bends to external pressure from a country like

the United States, it will take the election of another Israeli Prime Minister strong enough to lead a government and public to create another atmosphere for Land for Peace.

Asad and his minority 'Alawis regime, on the other hand will remain concerned with the internal opposition, the Islamic fundamentalist movement, that does not want to see peace with Israel at all. As chapter one explains, Asad will have a difficult time making peace with Israel because he will have to give up his image of being the last of the Arab holdout. However, chapter five provides hope that Asad can transcend some of his own concerns. That hope stems from the 1991 to 1996 negotiations, particularly Asad's speech in Geneva.

In closing, the best recommendation is for Syria and Israel to return to the negotiating tables and pickup where they left off in the Spring of 1996. Perhaps they can start reviewing the solution outlined in chapter six of this thesis and from there produce a modified document that will result in an Israeli-Syrian peace agreement. Until then, peace is not even remotely possible.

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